

UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DO PARANÁ

ANA LUCIA ZANATTA

EFEITO DUAL DA SUPLEMENTAÇÃO DA DIETA COM ÓLEO DE PEIXE NA  
INFLAMAÇÃO PULMONAR DE RATOS ASMÁTICOS: PAF E PARÂMETROS  
RELACIONADOS AO ESTRESSE OXIDATIVO

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Dissertação apresentada como requisito parcial  
à obtenção do grau de Mestre em Fisiologia,  
Curso de Pós-Graduação em Fisiologia, Setor  
de Ciências Biológicas, Universidade Federal  
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Orientadora: Profª Drª Anita Nishiyama

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## PARECER

Os abaixo-assinados, membros da Banca Examinadora da Defesa de Dissertação de Mestrado, a qual se submeteu **ANA LÚCIA ZANATTA** para fins de obter o título de Mestre em Fisiologia pela Universidade Federal do Paraná, são de parecer unânime à APROVAÇÃO da acadêmica.

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Curitiba, 01 de agosto de 2013.

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*“Quem conseguir concentrar seu pensamento, se esforçar e pesquisar ao máximo tudo a respeito do empreendimento almejado terá êxito. Só tem êxito a pessoa que possui firmemente delineado na mente o objetivo almejado.” (Y. luassaca)*

## RESUMO

A suplementação da dieta com óleo de peixe aumenta a disponibilidade de ácidos graxos poliinsaturados n-3 nas membranas celulares, os quais podem sofrer peroxidação lipídica no ambiente oxidante característico da asma. A cascata de reações oxidativas culmina em produção aumentada de componentes associados ao estresse oxidativo e de um importante mediador lipídico pró-inflamatório, o lipídio fator de agregação plaquetária (PAF)-like. Na presente investigação, nós avaliamos o efeito da suplementação com óleo de peixe de animais asmáticos sobre a bioatividade de PAF e sobre parâmetros relacionados ao estresse oxidativo: produção de nitritos e hidroperóxido lipídico, atividade das enzimas antioxidantes superóxido dismutase, catalase e glutathione peroxidase. A suplementação dos animais asmáticos com óleo de peixe reduziu a produção de nitritos ( $1,719 \pm 0,137$  nmol/mL vs.  $2,454 \pm 0,163$  nmol/mL), de hidroperóxidos lipídicos ( $72,190 \pm 7,327$  nmol/mg de proteína vs.  $120,200 \pm 11,270$  nmol/mg de proteína) e a infiltração de leucócitos ( $2,040 \pm 0,200 \times 10^6$  vs.  $3,330 \pm 0,430 \times 10^6$ ). Com o suplemento, os ratos asmáticos apresentaram um aumento na atividade da superóxido dismutase ( $33,910 \pm 2,325$  U/mg de proteína vs.  $24,110 \pm 0,618$  U/mg proteína) e da glutathione peroxidase ( $164,100 \pm 31,250$  U/mg de proteína vs.  $12,590 \pm 5,234$  U/mg de proteína). O óleo de peixe também promoveu, em animais asmáticos, o aumento da eosinofilia ( $6,400 \pm 0,830 \times 10^5$ /mL vs.  $3,370 \pm 0,640 \times 10^5$ /mL) e do extravasamento de proteínas ( $153,400 \pm 12,780$  µg/mL vs.  $91,620 \pm 6,270$  µg/mL). No entanto, o óleo de peixe não afetou a bioatividade de PAF no tecido pulmonar de ratos asmáticos ( $0,545 \pm 0,098$  razão 340/380 nm vs.  $0,669 \pm 0,101$  razão 340/380 nm). Uma vez que o óleo de peixe modificou as reações iniciais da sequência oxidativa para a geração de PAF, mas não afetou a sua bioatividade, podemos concluir que a suplementação da dieta de ratos asmáticos com óleo de peixe tem efeito dual, tanto em parâmetros relacionados ao balanço oxidativo quanto na inflamação. O óleo de peixe reduz o estresse oxidativo e a infiltração de leucócitos, mas não apresenta efeito sobre a bioatividade de PAF; aumenta o extravasamento de proteínas e aumenta a eosinofilia no LBA de animais asmáticos.

Palavras-chave: óleo de peixe, asma, estresse oxidativo, PAF/PAF-like

## ABSTRACT

Dietary fish oil supplementation increases polyunsaturated fatty acids n-3 availability in cellular membranes, which could suffer lipid peroxidation in oxidative environment characteristic of asthma. The oxidative reactions cascade culminate in an increased production of components associated to oxidative stress and an important proinflammatory lipid mediator, the platelet-activating factor (PAF)-like lipid. In the present investigation, we evaluated the effect of fish oil supplementation in asthmatic animals on the PAF bioactivity and parameters related to oxidative stress: production of nitrites and lipid hydroperoxide, activity of antioxidant enzymes superoxide dismutase, catalase and glutathione peroxidase. Fish oil supplementation of asthmatic animals reduced the production of nitrites ( $1.719 \pm 0.137$  nmol/mL vs.  $2.454 \pm 0.163$  nmol/mL), lipid hydroperoxides ( $72.190 \pm 7.327$  nmol/mg protein vs.  $120.200 \pm 11.270$  nmol/mg protein) and leukocyte infiltration ( $2.040 \pm 0.200 \times 10^6$  vs.  $3.330 \pm 0.430 \times 10^6$ ). With the supplement, the asthmatic rats showed an increase in the activity of superoxide dismutase ( $33.910 \pm 2.325$  U/mg protein vs.  $24.110 \pm 0.618$  U/mg protein) and glutathione peroxidase ( $164.100 \pm 31.250$  U/mg protein vs.  $12.590 \pm 5.234$  U/mg protein). Fish oil also promoted, in asthmatic animals, an increase in the eosinophils ( $6.400 \pm 0.830 \times 10^5$ /mL vs.  $3.370 \pm 0.640 \times 10^5$ /mL) and the protein extravasation ( $153.400 \pm 12.780$   $\mu$ g/mL vs.  $91.620 \pm 6.270$   $\mu$ g/mL). However, fish oil did not affect the PAF bioactivity in lung tissue of asthmatic rats ( $0.545 \pm 0.098$  340/380 nm ratio vs.  $0.669 \pm 0.101$  340/380 nm ratio). Since the fish oil modified the initial reactions of the oxidative sequence for the generation of PAF but did not affect its bioactivity, we conclude that the dietary fish oil supplementation of asthmatic rats has a dual effect, both on parameters related to oxidative balance and in inflammation. Fish oil reduces oxidative stress and leukocytes infiltration, but has no effect on the PAF bioactivity; increases protein extravasation and the eosinophilia in BALF of asthmatic animals.

Key-words: fish oil, asthma, oxidative stress, PAF/PAF-like

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## LISTA DE ABREVIATURAS E SIGLAS

Grupo A – grupo asmático

AGPI(s) – ácido graxo poliinsaturado(s)

Grupo AS – grupo asmático suplementado com óleo de peixe

BHT – hidroxitolueno butilado

Grupo C – grupo controle

CAT – catalase

CEEA – Comitê de Ética em Experimentação Animal

CEUA – Comissão de Ética no Uso de Animais

COX – ciclooxigenase

DHA – ácido docosahexaenóico

DMSO – dimetil sulfóxido

DNA - ácido desoxirribonucléico

EPA – ácido eicosapentaenóico

EPM – erro padrão da média

FURA-2 AM – FURA-2 acetoximetil éster

G-CSF – fator estimulador de colônias de granulocitos

GPx – glutathione peroxidase

HETE - ácido hidroxi-eicosatetraenóico

HPETE – ácido hidroperoxi-eicosatetraenóico

i.p. – intraperitoneal

ICAM-1 – moléculas de adesão intercelular-1

IL-1 $\beta$  – interleucina 1-beta

IL-4 – interleucina 4

IL-5 – interleucina 5

IL-8 – interleucina 8

LBA – lavado broncoalveolar

LOX – lipoxigenase

LT – leucotrieno

NADPH – nicotinamida adenina dinucleotídeo fosfato reduzido

OVA – ovalbumina

PAF – fator de ativação plaquetária

PBS – solução salina tamponada com fosfato

PG – prostagladina

PMN – células polimorfonucleares

ERN – espécie reativa de nitrogênio

ERO – espécie reativa de oxigênio

RNS – reactive nitrogen species (espécie reativa de nitrogênio)

ROS – reactive oxygen species (espécie reativa de oxigênio)

Grupo S – grupo suplementado com óleo de peixe

SOD – superóxido dismutase

TPP – trifenilfosfina

TX – tromboxano

WST-1 – sal terazólio solúvel em água

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## 1 INTRODUÇÃO

### 1.1 ÓLEO DE PEIXE COMO SUPLEMENTO DA DIETA

O óleo de peixe contém quantidades substanciais de ácidos graxos poliinsaturados (AGPIs)  $\omega$ -3, representados pelo ácido eicosapentaenóico (EPA) e pelo ácido docosahexaenóico (DHA). Os AGPIs do tipo  $\omega$ -3 possuem cadeia carbônica longa, com 18 a 22 átomos de carbono, e múltiplas insaturações. A primeira dupla ligação ocorre entre o terceiro e quarto átomos de carbono a partir do terminal metila, sendo, denominados  $\omega$ -3 (HARRIS, 2004). Os peixes que tendem a ter maiores concentrações de EPA e DHA são: atum, sardinha, salmão e cavala (HARRIS, 2004; CALDER, 2011).

A importância dos AGPIs  $\omega$ -3 da dieta na funcionalidade de leucócitos tem sido evidenciada desde a década de 80, basicamente pela sua conversão em eicosanóides bioativos: prostaglandinas, leucotrienos, tromboxanos e outros derivados oxidados (YAQOOB; CALDER, 2007). Os eicosanóides são mediadores inflamatórios gerados a partir do ácido araquidônico pelos processos metabólicos descritos na Figura 1. Os eicosanóides estão envolvidos na modulação da intensidade e da duração das respostas inflamatórias (CALDER, 2006).

Com o consumo de óleo de peixe, os AGPIs  $\omega$ -3 são incorporados nas membranas celulares, reduzindo a disponibilidade de ácido araquidônico para síntese de eicosanóides pró-inflamatórios (FETTERMAN; ZDANOWICZ, 2009; COVAR *et al.*, 2010; CALDER, 2010).

O EPA também é substrato para as enzimas ciclooxigenase (COX) e lipoxigenase (LOX), podendo ocasionar a produção de eicosanóides (BRITTON, 1995; CALDER, 2011). No entanto, os mediadores produzidos a partir deste AGPIs  $\omega$ -3 têm estrutura diferente daqueles derivados do ácido araquidônico e isto influencia a sua potência (CALDER, 2011). Estes eicosanóides derivados do EPA apresentam, normalmente, atividade biológica menor do que àqueles produzidos a partir do ácido araquidônico (BRITTON, 1995; CALDER, 2011). EPA e DHA também são fontes de resolvinas e protectinas, mediadores anti-inflamatórios que estão envolvidos na resolução da inflamação (Figura 2).

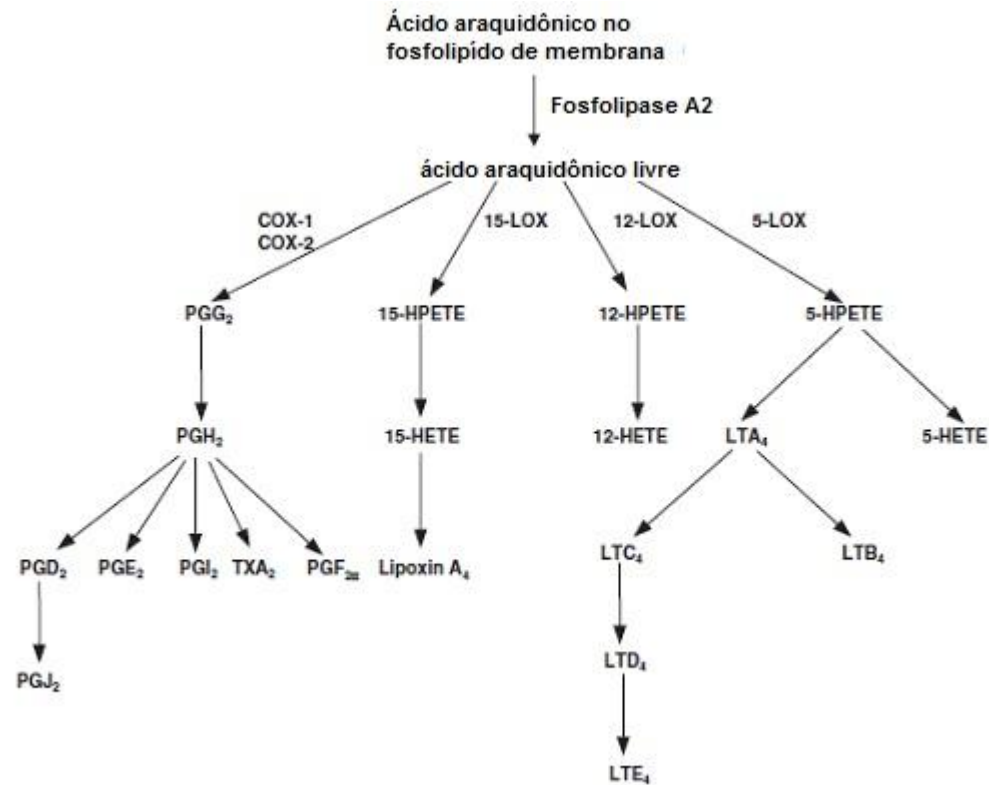


Figura 1. Visão geral da síntese de eicosanóides a partir do ácido araquidônico. COX, ciclooxigenase; HETE, ácido hidroxieicosatetraenóico; HPETE, ácido hidroperoxieicosatetraenóico; LOX, lipoxigenase; LT, leucotrieno; PG, prostagladina; TX, tromboxano. Adaptado de Calder, 2006.

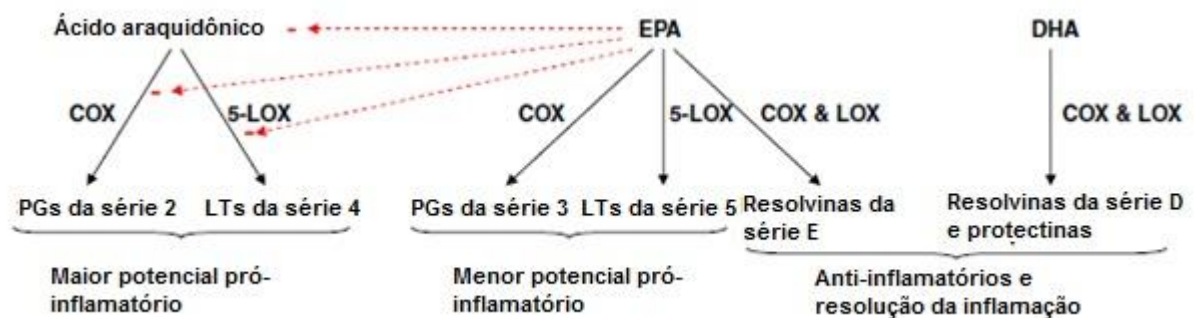


Figura 2. Visão geral da síntese e ação de mediadores lipídicos produzidos a partir de ácido araquidônico, EPA e DHA. COX, ciclooxigenase; LOX, lipoxigenase; LT, leucotrieno; PG, prostagladina. Adaptado de Calder, 2011.

Atualmente, são amplamente conhecidos os efeitos anti-inflamatórios da suplementação da dieta com AGPIs  $\omega$ -3, em vários órgãos e sistemas decorrentes, pelo menos em parte, do aumento de prostaglandinas da série E-3 e resolvinas das séries E e D e redução dos eicosanóides pró-inflamatórios (CALDER, 2009; CALDER, 2010). Entretanto, as insaturações desses ácidos graxos os tornam

facilmente oxidados, por serem mais suscetíveis ao ataque mediado por agentes oxidantes (MARATHE *et al.*, 2000), podendo gerar moléculas com atividade pró-inflamatória. Existem estudos indicando que o consumo de gordura de peixes (ricas em EPA e DHA) é associado com a redução do risco de desenvolvimento de asma (HODGE *et al.*, 1996; YIN *et al.*, 2009) e que a suplementação com óleo de peixe pode modular as concentrações de mediadores lipídicos com importante papel na asma. No entanto, uma revisão sistemática dos efeitos da suplementação da dieta de pacientes asmáticos com óleo de peixe não é consistentemente associada com efeitos benéficos (DEVEREUX, 2010; YIN *et al.*, 2009). De fato, existem poucas evidências científicas que apoiam a recomendação de tal suplementação para auxiliar o controle da asma, já que os resultados oferecem informações conflitantes (THIEN *et al.*, 2004; COVAR *et al.*, 2010).

## 1.2 ASMA: UMA DOENÇA ASSOCIADA AO ESTRESSE OXIDATIVO

A asma é uma doença inflamatória (COMHAIR; ERZURUM, 2010; OWAYED; DHAUNSI; AL-MUKHAIZEEM, 2008; CARLO; LEVY, 2008) em que está presente o estresse oxidativo, o qual se caracteriza pelo desequilíbrio entre agentes oxidantes e antioxidantes (KALELI *et al.*, 2006; OWAYED; DHAUNSI; AL-MUKHAIZEEM, 2008; REYNAERT *et al.*, 2007). O alto teor de oxigênio no ambiente pulmonar torna-o susceptível a lesão mediada por estresse oxidativo. Os produtos formados nesta condição, como as espécies reativas de oxigênio (EROs) e espécies reativas de nitrogênio (ERNs), são biomarcadores da progressão da doença (VOYNOW; KUMMARAPURUGU, 2011). ERO pode ser gerado endogenamente nas reações metabólicas, tais como transporte de elétrons mitocondrial durante a respiração ou durante a ativação de células inflamatórias. Partículas de poluição do ar, como fumaça de cigarro, ozônio e material particulado transportado pelo ar, constituem outra fonte de ERO, afetando as vias aéreas (KIRKHAM; RAHMAN, 2006). Em relação ao processo inflamatório das doenças das vias respiratórias, como asma e doença pulmonar obstrutiva crônica, ocorre aumento na produção de ERO por ativação de células inflamatórias. Dentre as ERO e ERN produzidas estão ânion superóxido, peróxido de hidrogênio, radical hidroxila, óxido nítrico e



peroxinitrito (COMHAIR; ERZURUM, 2010; OWAYED; DHAUNSI; AL-MUKHAIZEEM, 2008; PERIŠIĆ; SREČKOVIĆ; MATIĆ, 2007).

Estudos têm demonstrado que o aumento na formação destes agentes oxidantes observado na asma está correlacionado com a severidade da doença (MAK *et al.*, 2004; REYNAERT *et al.*, 2007). Estas espécies reativas estão associadas a muitas alterações fisiopatológicas que são relevantes na asma, como peroxidação lipídica, formação de isoprostanos, aumento na reatividade das vias aéreas, produção de agentes quimiotáxicos e permeabilidade vascular (NADEEM *et al.*, 2003). Estes agentes oxidantes participam do desenvolvimento da doença, particularmente durante o período de exacerbação da inflamação asmática (COMHAIR; ERZURUM, 2010; OWAYED; DHAUNSI; AL-MUKHAIZEEM, 2008). Sendo assim, os agentes oxidantes ou marcadores da oxidação atualmente servem como parâmetros para a avaliação da gravidade da doença (REYNAERT *et al.*, 2007).

Outra característica desta patologia é a perda das defesas antioxidantes (COMHAIR; ERZURUM, 2010; KALELI *et al.*, 2006; MAK *et al.*, 2004; NADEEM *et al.*, 2003; OWAYED; DHAUNSI; AL-MUKHAIZEEM, 2008). O pulmão e o sangue são dotados de diversos agentes antioxidantes, tanto enzimáticos como não enzimático, todos com a função de combater a toxicidade mediada por agentes oxidantes. Dentre os agentes enzimáticos podemos citar a glutathione peroxidase (GPx), superóxido dismutase (SOD), catalase (CAT), heme oxigenase, glutarredoxina, tioredoxina e peroxiredoxina. Como agente não enzimático existem os carotenóides, a glutathione, as vitaminas E, A e C (COMHAIR; ERZURUM, 2010; MAK *et al.*, 2004; NADEEM *et al.*, 2003). As ERO e ERN aumentadas levam a modificações de proteínas e alterações nas suas funções que são biologicamente relevantes para a iniciação e manutenção da inflamação (COMHAIR; ERZURUM, 2010). Uma destas alterações é a redução da capacidade antioxidante da SOD, CAT e GPx (COMHAIR; ERZURUM, 2010; MAK *et al.*, 2004; OWAYED; DHAUNSI; AL-MUKHAIZEEM, 2008; PERIŠIĆ; SREČKOVIĆ; MATIĆ, 2007; REYNAERT *et al.*, 2007). Ou seja, no pulmão dos indivíduos asmáticos, são geradas quantidades de ERO e ERN capazes de sobrepujar a atividade do sistema antioxidante do organismo. Na ausência de proteção antioxidante, as espécies reativas geradas provocam diversos danos nas células, como, danos ao DNA e aos lipídios de membrana, levando à produção de novas espécies reativas ainda mais danosas ao organismo e, de forma

descontrolada (OWAYED; DHAUNSI; AL-MUKHAIZEEM, 2008; REYNAERT *et al.*, 2007; ZIMMERMAN; PRESCOTT; MCINTYRE, 1995) (Figura 3).

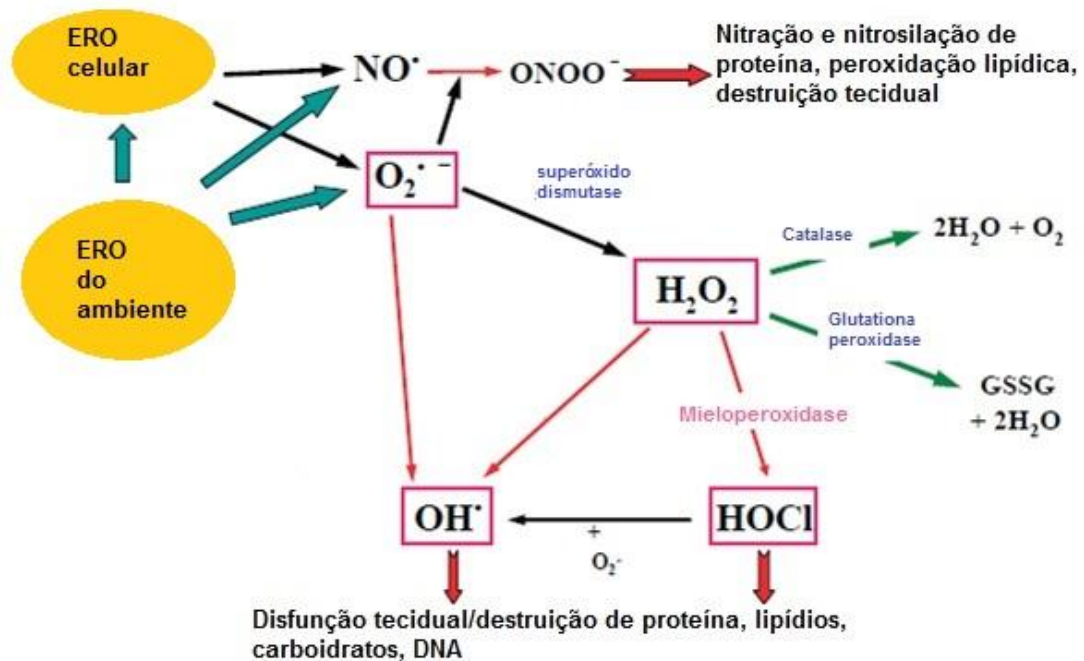


Figura 3. Consequências moleculares do estresse oxidativo. O ânion superóxido pode ser transformado em espécies reativas de oxigênio e nitrogênio mais potentes e danosas, como ácido hipercloroso, radical hidroxil e peroxinitrito por meio de uma série de etapas enzimáticas e não enzimáticas. A defesa antioxidante endógena (glutathiona peroxidase, superóxido dismutase e catalase) neutraliza e remove estas ERO e ERN. ERO, espécies reativas de oxigênio; ERN, espécies reativas de nitrogênio;  $O_2^{\bullet -}$ , ânion superóxido;  $H_2O_2$ , peróxido de hidrogênio;  $OH^{\bullet}$ , radical hidroxil;  $HOCl$ , ácido hipercloroso;  $NO$ , óxido nítrico;  $ONOO^-$ , peroxinitrito; GSSG, dímeros de glutathiona oxidada. Adaptado de Kirkham; Rahman, 2006.

### 1.2.1 Fator de agregação plaquetária (PAF) na asma

O PAF é um fosfolípido biologicamente ativo, gerado por via enzimática, exerce vários efeitos pró-inflamatórios e tem papel central na inflamação asmática (MUEHLMANN *et al.*, 2010). O PAF é um dos mediadores pró-inflamatórios mais potentes já identificados (UHLIG; GOGGEL; ENGEL, 2005) e estudos demonstram a relação do PAF com a inflamação pulmonar asmática (UHLIG; GOGGEL; ENGEL, 2005; MUEHLMANN *et al.*, 2010), sendo alta a sua concentração em pacientes com asma (HSIEH; NG, 1993). No quadro asmático, as ações mais importantes do PAF incluem a quimiotaxia e ativação de leucócitos, aumento da permeabilidade vascular, hiperresponsividade brônquica e consequente broncoconstrição

(PRESCOTT *et al.*, 2000; ZIMMERMAN *et al.*, 2002; UHLIG; GOGGEL; ENGEL, 2005) (Figura 4).

A síntese do PAF é altamente regulada e geralmente envolve mecanismo de dois passos (ZIMMERMAN *et al.*, 2002) (Figura 4). Inicialmente ocorre a esterificação da posição sn-2 do esqueleto de glicerol de uma lisofosfatidilcolina, em uma via enzimática. Posteriormente, a acetilação pela acetil transferase com a consequente produção do PAF bioativo (MARATHE *et al.*, 2001).

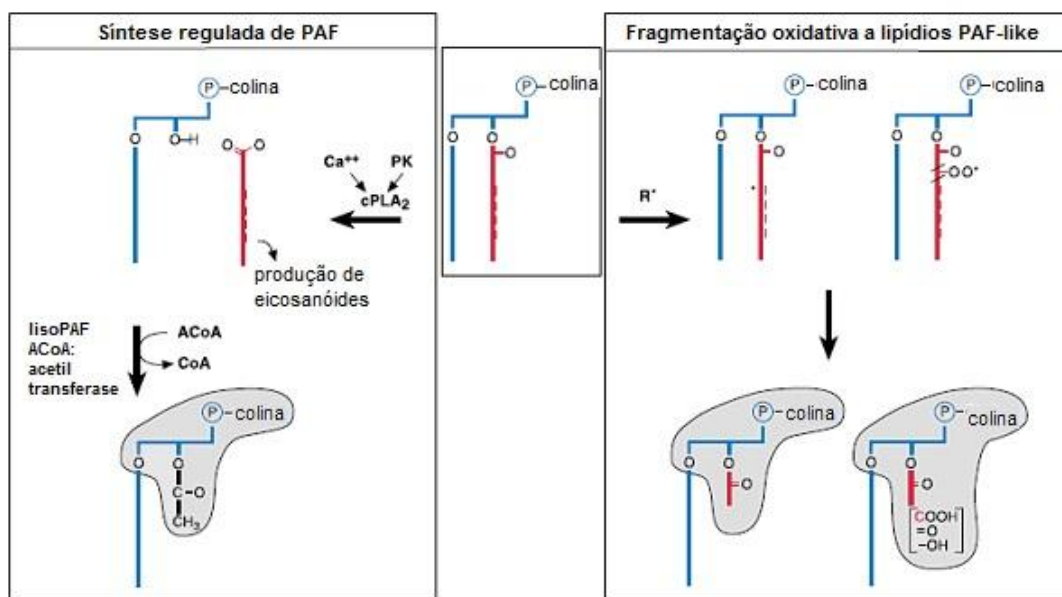


Figura 4. Síntese enzimática de fator de agregação plaquetária (PAF) e geração não enzimática de lipídio PAF-like. A síntese de PAF (esquerda) é um processo cuidadosamente controlado no qual um resíduo acetil é substituído por um araquidonoil poliinsaturado na posição sn-2. O receptor de PAF reconhece três características do fosfolípido (área acinzentada): uma ligação éter na posição sn-1, um pequeno resíduo na posição sn-2 e uma cabeça de fosfocolina. Oxidação descontrolada (direita) de fragmentos de fosfatidilcolinas alquil poliinsaturado e pode oxidar o resíduo na posição sn-2. Alguns dos vários produtos de oxidação de fosfolípidios contêm as mesmas características do PAF e, assim, são ligantes potentes e agonistas do receptor de PAF. Adaptado de Prescott *et al.*, 2000.

### 1.3 MEDIADORES LIPÍDICOS GERADOS POR VIAS NÃO ENZIMÁTICAS E SEU PAPEL NA INFLAMAÇÃO ASMÁTICA: Hidroperóxidos lipídicos, isoprostanos e PAF-like

O estresse oxidativo observado na asma torna o ambiente propício para a ocorrência de reações oxidativas produzindo mediadores inflamatórios derivados de AGPIs  $\omega$ -6 e  $\omega$ -3 (MARATHE *et al.*, 2000). Diante disso, pode-se considerar que reações não enzimáticas e sem regulação pelo sistema antioxidante poderiam ser fonte importante de mediadores pró-inflamatórios no quadro asmático.

Inicialmente, neste processo de lipoperoxidação, é formado radical lipídico no ácido graxo ainda esterificado no fosfolipídio (CRACOWSKI; DURAND; BESSARD, 2002). Este radical lipídico reage com uma molécula de oxigênio e é formado o radical peroxil lipídico, o qual é capaz de abstrair hidrogênio de outro AGPI (FRANKEL, 1984), iniciando desta forma reação em cadeia que tem como produto principal os hidroperóxidos lipídicos (Figura 5). Em tecidos onde ocorre estresse oxidativo, como no caso do pulmão de indivíduos asmáticos, em que ocorre redução da defesa antioxidante, é formada grande quantidade de hidroperóxidos lipídicos, que então é degradada por reações subsequentes (WOOD; GIBSON; GARG, 2003), podendo gerar espécies químicas com atividade pró-inflamatórias (MARATHE *et al.*, 2001). Com o consumo de óleo de peixe, há maior disponibilidade de AGPIs  $\omega$ -3 que poderia sofrer peroxidação lipídica, intensificando desta forma a produção de hidroperóxidos lipídicos e de mediadores pró-inflamatórios lipídicos, como os lipídios PAF-*like* e isoprostanos.

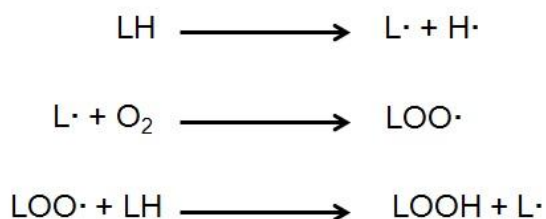


Figura 5. Sequência de reações para geração de hidroperóxidos lipídicos. LH, lipídio insaturado (ácido graxo poliinsaturado); L $\cdot$ , radical livre lipídico; H $\cdot$ , átomo de hidrogênio livre; LOO $\cdot$ , radical peroxil; LOOH, hidroperóxido lipídico. Adaptado de Frankel, 1984.

Os isoprostanos são compostos semelhantes às prostaglandinas formados pela peroxidação de AGPIs em tecidos, principalmente do ácido araquidônico, independente da ação da COX (VOYNOW; KUMMARAPURUGU, 2011). Considerando a semelhança estrutural aos prostanóides (prostaglandinas, prostaciclina e tromboxanos), foi demonstrado que os isoprostanos ativam receptores de tromboxano (receptor TP) (BASU, 2010; VOYNOW; KUMMARAPURUGU, 2011; WOOD; GIBSON; GARG, 2003) e de prostaglandinas (receptores FP, EP1-4) (VOYNOW; KUMMARAPURUGU, 2011), exercendo atividade biológica significativa (BASU, 2010; WOOD; GIBSON; GARG, 2003). Ao se ligarem a estes receptores, os isoprostanos apresentam diversos efeitos fisiológicos e patológicos, como regulação do tônus da musculatura lisa das vias aéreas e sua

hiperresponsividade (VOYNOW; KUMMARAPURUGU, 2011; WOOD; GIBSON; GARG, 2003), vasoconstrição pulmonar (BASU, 2010) e exsudação do plasma (WOOD; GIBSON; GARG, 2003). Na asma, a gravidade da doença está positivamente associada com a quantidade de isoprostanos e altas concentrações desta molécula são detectadas em modelos animais de asma e em pacientes asmáticos (WOOD; GIBSON; GARG, 2003).

Uma ação importante dos isoprostanos na asma é a modulação da função das células musculares lisas das vias aéreas pela regulação da produção de quimiocinas. Foi demonstrado que os isoprostanos podem promover o aumento de interleucina-1 $\beta$  (IL-1 $\beta$ ) induzida por fator estimulador de colônias de granulócitos (G-CSF) nas células musculares lisas das vias aéreas de humanos (VOYNOW; KUMMARAPURUGU, 2011). Esta é uma ação significativa dos isoprostanos, já que estas quimiocinas representam uma via indireta de amplificação da resposta inflamatória. Outras ações importantes dos isoprostanos sobre o processo inflamatório são: estimulação da adesão de macrófagos e neutrófilos a células endoteliais venosas, aumento da expressão de IL-8 em macrófagos e aumento da permeabilidade das células endoteliais (VOYNOW; KUMMARAPURUGU, 2011).

### 1.3.1 Lipídio PAF-like

O PAF-like é uma molécula semelhante ao PAF com importantes efeitos pró-inflamatórios e gerada não-enzimaticamente a partir da fosfatidilcolina.

Há algumas décadas, Smiley *et al.* (1990) realizaram um experimento que consistia em fragmentar a 1-palmitoil-2-araquidonoil-sn-glicero-3-fosfocolina em reação não controlada catalisada por radicais livres. Esta reação gerou numerosos fragmentos lipídicos, os quais eram capazes de ativar células polimorfonucleares e a hidrólise do resíduo sn-2 destes fragmentos com PAF acetilhidrolase anulou a atividade biológica dos mesmos. Neste mesmo estudo foi observado que a ativação dos neutrófilos era completamente bloqueada por antagonista específico do receptor de PAF. Com este experimento, Smiley *et al.* (1990) demonstraram que a oxidação de fosfolipídios contendo, na posição sn-2, resíduo acil de AGPI cria moléculas com atividade biológica PAF-like (Figura 6). Em seus estudos, Smiley *et al.* (1990) já sugeriram que fosfolipídios PAF-like possam ser gerados em algumas condições patológicas em que EROs desempenham papel essencial na doença. Atualmente, já

está bem estabelecida a participação do lipídio PAF-*like* em diversas condições, tais como aterosclerose e asma.

As moléculas PAF-*like* são produzidas pela oxidação de lipídios de membrana, possuem ação biológica semelhante ao PAF e atuam por meio do mesmo receptor ao qual o PAF se liga (receptor PTAFR) (MARATHE *et al.*, 2000; ZIMMERMAN; PRESCOTT; MCINTYRE, 1995; MUEHLMANN *et al.*, 2010), por isto a denominação PAF-*like* (Figura 7). Mesmo apresentando atividade inflamatória de menor potência do que o PAF, os lipídios PAF-*like* possuem ação importante na inflamação asmática devido a sua geração descontrolada e em grande quantidade (MARATHE *et al.*, 1999).

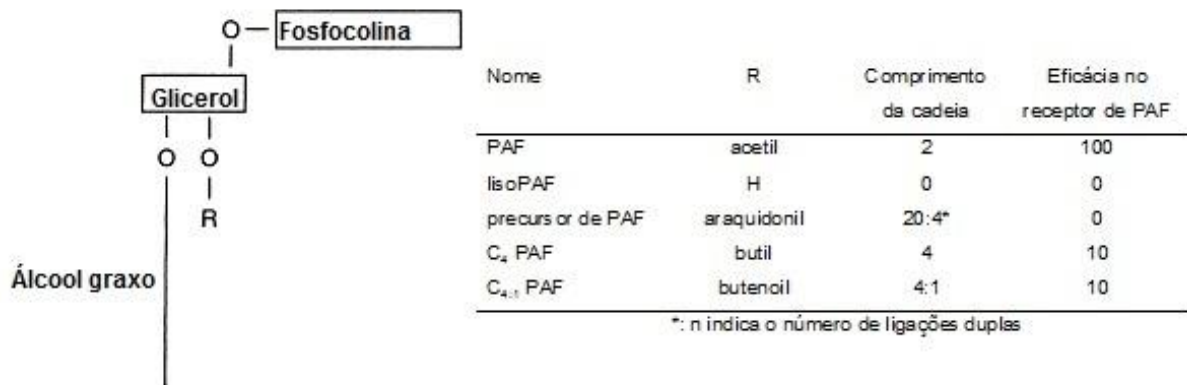


Figura 6. PAF e seus análogos biologicamente ativos. PAF é uma fosfatidilcolina modificada onde as modificações conferem reconhecimento de elevada afinidade pelo receptor de PAF. A posição 1 do esqueleto de glicerol do PAF contém um éter de álcool graxo. A posição 3 da molécula de PAF tem um grupamento cabeça de fosfocolina, enquanto a posição 2 contém um resíduo curto de acetato de ácido graxo. O receptor reconhece a ligação éter, o grupamento cabeça de colina e, especialmente, o resíduo curto na posição sn-2. Nem o lisoPAF nem precursores fosfatidilcolina alquil de PAF ativam o receptor, mas outros análogos de PAF formados pela oxidação o fazem. Adaptado de Marathe *et al.*, 2001.

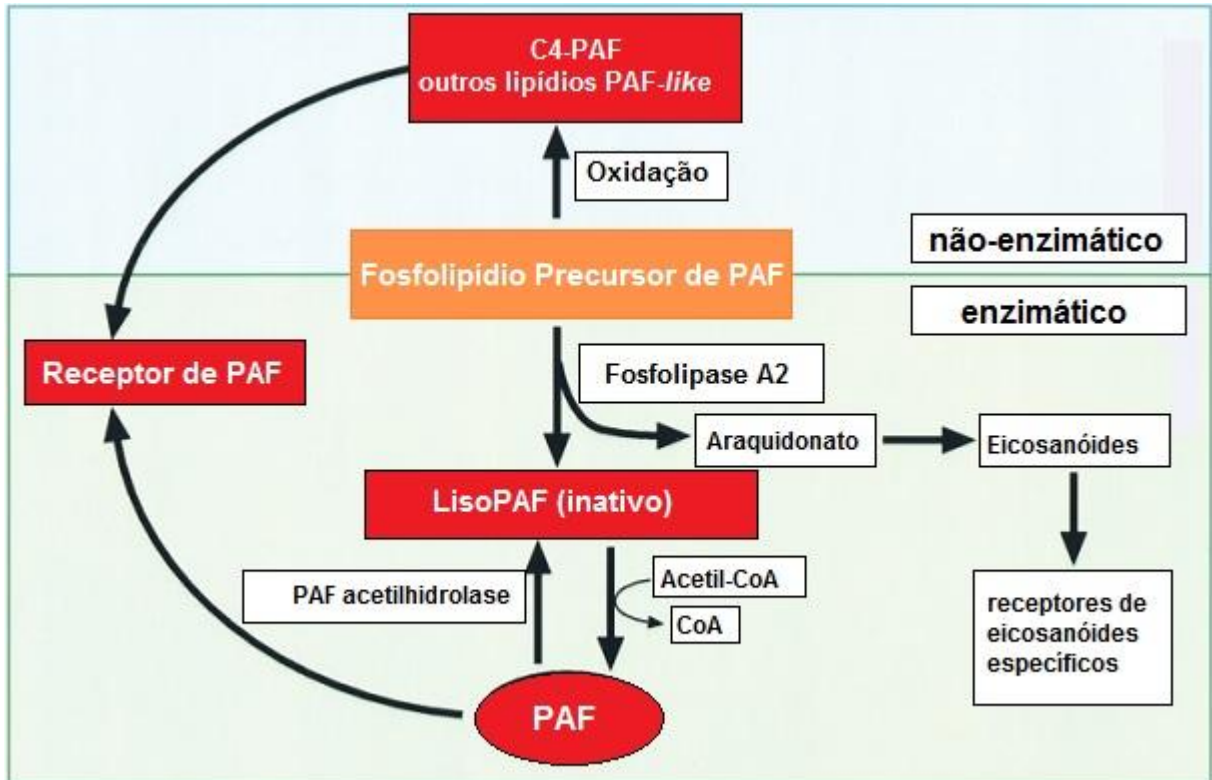


Figura 7. Formação enzimática e não enzimática de PAF. A biossíntese enzimática começa com a hidrólise mediada por fosfolipase A2 do precursor de PAF, originando lisoPAF e araquidonato. LisoPAF sofre acetilação catalisada por uma acetiltransferase para formar PAF biologicamente ativo. O PAF é hidrolisado e inativado pela PAF acetilhidrolase para formar lisoPAF. Na via não enzimática o fosfolípido precursor de PAF é fragmentado em uma reação química catalisada por radicais livres, para formar lipídios PAF-like com resíduos butanoil e butenoil (C4-PAF) na posição sn-2. Os miméticos de PAF oxidativamente formados são apenas ligeiramente menos potente do que o PAF, mas, em contraste com a fina regulação da síntese enzimática de PAF, são formados em abundância por processo oxidativo desregulado. Adaptado de Marathe *et al.*, 2001.

## 2 JUSTIFICATIVA

O estresse oxidativo é importante componente patofisiológico da asma. No pulmão de indivíduos asmáticos são geradas ERO e ERN em quantidades capaz de sobrepujar o sistema antioxidante do organismo. Esta condição torna o ambiente pulmonar propício para a oxidação de biomoléculas, gerando substâncias capazes de promover alterações na estrutura e na funcionalidade das células do pulmão. Dentre as substâncias alvo destas reações estão os AGPIs  $\omega$ -6 e  $\omega$ -3 que, ao sofrer peroxidação lipídica neste ambiente em desequilíbrio oxidativo, geram mediadores inflamatórios como o lipídio PAF-*like*.

Como o estresse oxidativo tem consequências importantes no quadro asmático e o PAF é um mediador pró-inflamatório de papel central na inflamação observada na asma, torna-se importante avaliar se a suplementação da dieta com óleo de peixe alteraria o estado de estresse oxidativo relacionado à resposta inflamatória asmática e a geração de lipídios PAF/PAF-*like*. Portanto, o presente estudo levanta o seguinte questionamento: a suplementação da dieta de animais asmáticos com óleo de peixe modifica a bioatividade de PAF como consequência de alterações no estresse oxidativo?



### 3 OBJETIVOS

#### 3.1 OBJETIVO GERAL

Avaliar o estresse oxidativo relacionado à resposta inflamatória pulmonar e a geração de lipídio PAF/PAF-*like* em ratos asmáticos submetidos à suplementação da dieta com óleo de peixe. Foram avaliados ainda, nestes animais, os efeitos desta dieta sobre indicadores da inflamação asmática.

#### 3.2 OBJETIVOS ESPECÍFICOS

- Induzir quadro inflamatório pulmonar semelhante ao da asma em animais inicialmente saudáveis.
- Suplementar a dieta de ratos asmáticos com óleo de peixe na dose de 1 g/Kg de massa corpórea por 21 dias.
- Avaliar os efeitos da suplementação da dieta com óleo de peixe em ratos asmáticos sobre os seguintes parâmetros:
  - Perfil citológico do lavado broncoalveolar (LBA)
  - Determinação do número absoluto de células no LBA
  - Quantificação de proteínas totais no LBA
  - Quantificação de nitritos no LBA
  - Quantificação de hidroperóxidos lipídicos no tecido pulmonar
  - Determinação da atividade da enzima antioxidante catalase no LBA
  - Determinação da atividade da enzima antioxidante superóxido dismutase no LBA
  - Determinação da atividade da enzima antioxidante glutathione peroxidase no LBA
  - Bioatividade de PAF no tecido pulmonar

Conforme norma para apresentação de dissertação prevista pelo Programa de Pós-graduação em Fisiologia da Universidade Federal do Paraná, a presente dissertação será redigida em inglês, contendo substancial conteúdo em língua

portuguesa, uma vez que um manuscrito, cujo conteúdo corresponde ao tema principal desta dissertação, está em fase de preparação. Os autores do artigo são:

AL Zanatta<sup>\*1</sup>, DTSZ Miranda<sup>1</sup>, BCL Dias<sup>1</sup>, RM Campos<sup>1</sup>, MC Massaro<sup>1</sup>, PV Michelotto Jr<sup>2</sup>, PC Calder<sup>3</sup>, A Nishiyama<sup>1</sup>

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O título proposto para o artigo é: DUAL EFFECT OF FISH OIL SUPPLEMENTATION ON OXIDATIVE STRESS AND PLATELET-ACTIVATING FACTOR BIOACTIVITY IN ASTHMATIC RATS.

Durante o curso de pós-graduação em fisiologia também foi redigida uma revisão sobre o tema principal do projeto, cujo título é: THE PREVENTION OF OXIDATIVE STRESS IMPROVE ASTHMATIC INFLAMMATION. Esta revisão foi publicada na revista *Advances in Bioscience and Biotechnology*, 2012, 3, 1087-1090 - doi:10.4236/abb.2012.38132 Published Online December 2012 (<http://www.SciRP.org/journal/abb/>). Os autores da revisão são:

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<sup>1</sup>Department of Physiology, Federal University of Paraná, Curitiba, Brazil

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Parte dos resultados obtidos neste projeto também já foi publicada na revista *Lipids* (que detém os direitos autorais) juntamente com os resultados parciais da doutoranda Dalva T. S. Z. Miranda. Este artigo trata do efeito do óleo de peixe sobre a funcionalidade do músculo liso das vias aéreas (THE EFFECTIVENESS OF FISH OIL SUPPLEMENTATION IN ASTHMATIC RATS IS LIMITED BY AN INEFFICIENT ACTION ON ASM FUNCTION). Os autores do referido artigo são:

D. T. S. Z. Miranda, A. L. Zanatta, B. C. L. Dias, R. T. H. Fogaça, J. B. B. Maurer, L. Donatti, P. C. Calder, A. Nishiyama

Na sequência são apresentados os artigos “DUAL EFFECT OF FISH OIL SUPPLEMENTATION ON OXIDATIVE STRESS AND PLATELET-ACTIVATING FACTOR BIOACTIVITY IN ASTHMATIC RATS” (submetido), “THE PREVENTION OF OXIDATIVE STRESS IMPROVE ASTHMATIC INFLAMMATION” (já publicado) e “THE EFFECTIVENESS OF FISH OIL SUPPLEMENTATION IN ASTHMATIC RATS IS LIMITED BY AN INEFFICIENT ACTION ON ASM FUNCTION” (já publicado).

**DUAL EFFECT OF FISH OIL SUPPLEMENTATION ON OXIDATIVE STRESS  
AND PLATELET-ACTIVATING FACTOR BIOACTIVITY IN ASTHMATIC RATS**

AL Zanatta<sup>\*1</sup>, DTSZ Miranda<sup>1</sup>, BCL Dias<sup>1</sup>, RM Campos<sup>1</sup>, MC Massaro<sup>1</sup>, PV Michelotto Jr<sup>2</sup>, PC Calder<sup>3</sup>, A Nishiyama<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

Dietary fish oil supplementation increases the content of n-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFA) in cellular membranes. The highly unsaturated nature of n-3 PUFA could result in an enhanced lipid peroxidation in the oxidative environment characteristic of asthma. The oxidative reaction cascade culminates in an increased production of components associated to oxidative stress and of an important proinflammatory mediator platelet-activating factor (PAF)-like lipid. We evaluated the effect of fish oil supplementation in asthmatic rats upon the PAF bioactivity and parameters related to oxidative stress in the lung. Fish oil supplementation of asthmatic rats resulted in lower concentrations of nitrite ( $1.719 \pm 0.137$  nmol/mL vs.  $2.454 \pm 0.163$  nmol/mL) and lipid hydroperoxide ( $72.190 \pm 7.327$  nmol/mg protein vs.  $120.200 \pm 11.270$  nmol/mg protein). In asthmatic animals, fish oil increased the activities of superoxide dismutase (EC 1.15.1.1) ( $33.910 \pm 2.325$  U/mg protein vs.  $24.110 \pm 0.618$  U/mg protein) and glutathione peroxidase (1.11.1.9) ( $164.100 \pm 31.250$  U/mg protein vs.  $12.590 \pm 5.234$  U/mg protein). However, fish oil did not affect PAF bioactivity in lung tissue of asthmatic rats ( $0.545 \pm 0.098$  340/380 nm ratio vs.  $0.669 \pm 0.101$  340/380 nm ratio). Considering the two-step process - oxidative stress and PAF bioactivity - fish oil exhibited a divergent action on these aspects of asthmatic inflammation, since the supplement lowered oxidative stress in the lungs of asthmatic rats, presenting an antioxidant effect, but did not affect the PAF bioactivity. This suggests a dual effect of fish oil on oxidative stress and inflammation in asthma.

**Key words:** fish oil, asthma, oxidative stress, PAF/PAF-like

## Introduction

Asthma is a disease characterized by airway hyperresponsiveness accompanied by inflammation and oxidative stress, which are important pathophysiological components of this disease [1-5]. The oxidative stress is caused by an imbalance between the antioxidant defense mechanisms, especially the activity of antioxidant enzymes superoxide dismutase (SOD; EC 1.15.1.1), glutathione peroxidase (GPx; EC 1.11.1.9) and catalase (CAT; EC 1.11.1.6), and the generation of oxidants, such as reactive oxygen and nitrogen species (ROS and RNS) [2,4,5]. The excessive production of ROS during the inflammatory response seen in asthma [2,5] promotes damage to DNA, proteins and membrane lipids [6]. The oxidizing agents generated are related to the disease severity [5,7], since as a consequence of the increased lipid peroxidation, airway hyper-responsiveness, production of chemotactic agents and vascular permeability are all increased [8]. These effects observed in asthma are also caused by platelet activating factor (PAF) [9-12], that has a central role in the promoting asthmatic inflammation [12].

The oxidative stress observed in asthma fosters an environment conducive to oxidative reactions involving polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFA) of both n-6 and n-3 families resulting in the production of inflammatory mediators [13]. Dietary fish oil supplementation increases the content of n-3 PUFA in cellular membranes [14-16]. Although this is related to the anti-inflammatory effects of these fatty acids, their highly unsaturated nature makes them susceptible to lipid peroxidation, so enhancing the production of lipid hydroperoxides and the important proinflammatory lipid mediator, the PAF-like lipid. PAF-like molecules are produced by a non-enzymatic lipid oxidation pathway and they possess biological activity similar to PAF [12]. Although less potent than enzymatically produced PAF, the PAF-like lipids can play an important role in asthmatic inflammation because of their uncontrolled generation [17]. The current study addresses whether fish oil, a source of the n-3 PUFA eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), modifies the PAF bioactivity as a consequence of changes in oxidative stress in an animal model of asthma. We evaluated the effect of fish oil supplementation in asthmatic animals on PAF bioactivity and on parameters related to oxidative stress (production of nitrite and lipid hydroperoxides and activities of the antioxidant enzymes SOD, GPx and CAT) in lung fluid.

## Materials and Methods

### Reagents

Fish oil capsules were donated by Herbarium Foundation (Colombo, Paraná, Brazil). Glutathione peroxidase and superoxide dismutase assay kits were purchased from Bioassay Systems (Hayward, California, USA). BN52021 (Gingkolide B) and PAF ( $\beta$ -acetyl- $\gamma$ -O-hexadecyl-L- $\alpha$ -phosphatidylcholine) was obtained from Santa Cruz Biotechnology (Santa Cruz, California, USA). Fura-2 AM was purchased from AnaSpec (San Jose, California, USA). Ovalbumin (OVA) (Grade II), aluminum hydroxide ( $\text{Al}(\text{OH})_3$ ), triphenylphosphine, hydrogen peroxide and all other reagents were purchased from Sigma (St. Louis, Missouri, USA).

## Animals and dietary supplementation

Adult male Wistar rats weighing  $220 \pm 30$  g were obtained from the Biotery of the Biological Sciences Sector, Federal University of Paraná (Curitiba, Brazil). The animals had free access to water and to food (52% by weight of carbohydrates, 21% by weight of proteins and 4% by weight of total lipids; Nuvilab CR1, Nuvital Nutrientes Ltda, Curitiba, Paraná, Brazil) and were maintained on a reversed 12 h light/dark cycle. The animals were randomly divided into 4 groups: control (C), supplemented with fish oil (S), asthmatic (A), asthmatic supplemented with fish oil (AS). The supplementation consisted of daily oral administration of 1 g/kg body weight of fish oil for 21 days. The groups A and C received water at the same dose.

The fish oil capsules had the following fatty acid composition: lauric (12:0)  $7.0 \pm 0.1\%$ ; palmitic (16:0)  $14.2 \pm 1.9\%$ ; stearic (18:0)  $1.4 \pm 0.4\%$ ; oleic (18:1n-9)  $10.6 \pm 1.1\%$ ; linoleic (18:2n-6)  $3.3 \pm 0.3\%$ ;  $\alpha$ -linolenic (18:3n-3), amount not determined; arachidonic (20:4n-6)  $13.7 \pm 0.8\%$ ; EPA (22:5n-3)  $29.5 \pm 0.7\%$ ; DHA (22:6n-3)  $23.6 \pm 0.2\%$  [18].

All protocols were approved by the Ethics Committee on Animal Experimentation of the Federal University of Paraná, protocol 468, according to the Brazilian College on Animal Experimentation (COBEA) guidelines.

## Induction of asthma

On the 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> day of the dietary supplementation, allergic sensitization was induced in the A and AS groups by a subcutaneous injection of 1 mL of phosphate buffer saline (PBS) containing 1 mg of OVA and 200 mg of  $\text{Al}(\text{OH})_3$ . The animals in the C and S groups received only PBS containing  $\text{Al}(\text{OH})_3$ . On days 18, 19 and 20 of supplementation, the rats were submitted to antigenic challenge by exposure for 30 min to an aerosol of 5 g/100 mL OVA in PBS. The C and S groups were exposed to an aerosol of PBS only. 24 h after the last antigenic challenge the animals received a lethal dose of urethane (3 mg/g) intraperitoneally.

## BALF and lung collection

The bronchoalveolar lavage fluid (BALF) was collected for the determination of nitrite concentration and of the activities of SOD, GPx and CAT. The BALF collection procedure was performed through a tracheostomy at the upper part of the animal trachea. The lung was washed 10 times with 5 mL of PBS and 90-95% of the total volume was recovered. The collected BALF was kept on ice.

After BALF collection, the animals underwent thoracotomy and the lungs were removed and washed in PBS. The right lower lobe was collected for immediate lipid hydroperoxide determination. The intermediate lobe was collected, immediately frozen in liquid nitrogen and stored at  $-80^\circ\text{C}$  for subsequent determination of PAF bioactivity.

## Lipid extraction

Extraction of lipid from the lungs was performed as described by Folch *et al.* [19]. A 100 mg portion of lung intermediate lobe from each rat was homogenized in 1.33 mL of methanol/chloroform (1:2 v/v) with an electric homogenizer (GGS 27, Bosch) and 0.480 mL of methanol was added. The samples were then homogenized and centrifuged for 10 min at 5,000 g and 4°C. The supernatant was transferred to a glass tube (5 mL) and 0.96 mL of chloroform was added. The extract was washed once with ultrapure water and three times with washing solution (1.8 mM CaCl<sub>2</sub>, 1.8 mM MgCl<sub>2</sub>, 49.7 mM NaCl, 3.0% (v/v) chloroform, 49% (v/v) methanol, 48% (v/v) ultrapure water). After that, the extract was dried with a nitrogen stream at 37°C and stored at -80°C under nitrogen. To analyze the PAF bioactivity the lipid extract was solubilized with 100 µL of DMSO and then diluted with PBS (1:500 v/v).

## Nitrite concentration in BALF

BALF was centrifuged for 8 min at 290 g and 4°C. In a 96-well microplate, 100 µL of Griess reagent (1:1 mixture of 1 g/100 mL sulfanilamide in 5% (v/v) orthophosphoric acid and 0.1 g/100 mL N-[1-naphthyl]ethylenediamine) was added to 100 µL cell-free BALF. After five min the absorbance was measured at 550 nm using a microplate spectrophotometer (TECAN Infinite M200). Nitrite concentration was determined by interpolating absorbance values in a standard curve generated by known concentrations of sodium nitrite. Results are expressed as nmol/mL of BALF.

## Superoxide dismutase and Glutathione peroxidase activities in BALF

BALF was centrifuged for 8 min at 290 g and 4°C. The colorimetric determination of SOD and GPx activities in BALF was performed according to the kit manufacturer's protocols.

## Catalase activity in BALF

BALF was centrifuged for 20 min at 10,600 g and 4°C. The supernatant was discarded and the cells were resuspended in 100 µL of PBS and homogenized. An aliquot of 10 µL of cell extract was added to 990 µL of the reactive medium (20 mM H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>, 0.05 M tris[hydroxymethyl] aminomethane, 0.25 mM ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid, pH 7.4, aqueous solution). Starting immediately, the absorbance was monitored for 2 min, with an interval of 5 s between each reading, at 240 nm using a spectrophotometer (TECAN Infinite M200) [20]. Enzyme activity is determined by the H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> consumption from the medium, expressed as absorbance variation at 240 nm. CAT activity was corrected for the sample protein concentration and the results are expressed as consumption of H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> per min per mg of protein (mmol/min.mg protein).



### Lipid hydroperoxide concentration in lung

A methanol extract of lung tissue samples was done by mixing 400 mg of the right lower lung lobe in 1 mL of methanol, using an electric homogenizer (GGS 27, Bosch). The homogenate was centrifuged for 5 min at 5,000 g and 4°C. For each sample, aliquots of 90 µL of the supernatant were disposed in 6 centrifuge vials (1.5 mL). To 3 of these tubes were added 10 µL of methanolic triphenylphosphine (TPP) 10 mM. To the other 3 tubes were added 10 µL of methanol. All the six tubes were vortexed and then incubated for 30 min at room temperature. After that 900 µL FOX2 reagent (100 µM xylenol orange, 4 mM butylated hydroxytoluene (BHT), 25 mM sulfuric acid and 250 µM ammonium ferrous sulfate, 90% (v/v) methanol, 10% (v/v) ultrapure water) was added to all tubes. All the six tubes were vortexed and then incubated for another 30 min at room temperature. After the incubation time, absorbance was measured at 560 nm using a spectrophotometer (Ultrospec 2000, Pharmacia Biotech). Lipid hydroperoxide concentration was determined by interpolating absorbance values in a standard curve generated by known concentrations of H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> [21]. Results were corrected for the sample protein concentration and are expressed as nmol/mg protein.

### PAF bioactivity in lung

The determination of the PAF bioactivity was performed as described by Muehlmann *et al.* [12], by detection of calcium influx into neutrophils by a fluorescent indicator. Blood was collected from a horse by puncture of the jugular vein and deposited in bags of 500 mL containing sodium citrate as an anticoagulant (CPDA-1, JP Pharmaceutical Industry SA, São Paulo, Brazil). The blood was diluted in PBS (1:2 v/v) and 40 mL of diluted blood was layered over 6 mL of Ficoll Paque Plus and centrifuged for 40 min at 400 g and 4°C and the upper layer was discarded. The lower layer was divided into 2 centrifuge tubes of 50 mL. Each tube was completed with hemolytic solution (0.77% NH<sub>4</sub>Cl, 0.21% tris[hydroxymethyl]aminomethane, pH 7.4, aqueous solution). After incubation for 20 min at 37°C, polymorphonuclear cells were isolated by centrifugation for 6 min at 400 g and 4°C. The supernatant was discarded and polymorphonuclear cells were washed with PBS and centrifuged for 6 min at 400 g and 4°C. After removing the supernatant, cell pellet was resuspended in 5 mL of PBS containing 5 mM glucose. Cell density was determined by counting cells in a Neubauer chamber and then adjusted to 1.0x10<sup>7</sup> viable cells/mL.

FURA-2 AM (1µM) was added to the polymorphonuclear cells suspension and then incubated for 45 min at 37°C in the dark. After incubation, cells were washed twice with Ringer solution (110 mM NaCl, 4 mM KCl, 2 mM CaCl<sub>2</sub>, 2 mM MgCl<sub>2</sub>, 10 mM tris, 1 mM glucose, pH 7.4, aqueous solution) and resuspended in Ringer solution for the final density of 2.25 x 10<sup>6</sup> viable cells/mL. The fluorescence was measured at 37°C with dual excitation at 340 and 380 nm with the emission recorded at 510 nm by a microcomputer-coupled spectrofluorometer (RF5301PC, Shimadzu) controlled by the software Super Ion Probe (Shimadzu). For analysis, 2 mL of polymorphonuclear cells suspension were placed in a cuvette and incubated in the dark for 4 min at 37°C with 10µL of PBS or 10 µL of a PAF antagonist, BN52021 (150 µM). After a 50 seconds basal reading, 10 µL of the lung lipid extract was added to the polymorphonuclear cells suspension and the fluorescence resulting from calcium influx was monitored for 100 s. The difference of the response obtained in the absence and in the presence of BN52021 is a semi-quantitative indicator of the PAF

bioactivity in the samples. The polymorphonuclear cells suspension was also tested with 1, 10 and 100  $\mu$ M PAF, with and without BN52021. The results are expressed as 340/380 nm ratio.

### Statistical analysis

All values are expressed as means  $\pm$  standard error of the mean (SEM) for at least three replicates. Data were analyzed by one-way ANOVA followed by Tukey's post test. Differences were considered significant for  $P < 0.05$ .

## Results

### Nitrite concentration in BALF

Nitrite concentration was measured in BALF as an indicator of nitric oxide production. As shown in Figure 8, asthma caused a significant increase in nitrite concentration but the supplementation of asthmatic animals with fish oil partly prevented this effect. Nitrite concentration in asthmatic animals supplemented with fish oil was an average of 30% lower than in the asthmatic control group ( $P < 0.005$ ).

### Superoxide dismutase activity in BALF

BALF SOD activity was higher in non-asthmatic rats supplemented with fish oil than in control non-asthmatic rats (Figure 9). Asthma lowered BALF superoxide dismutase activity but this effect was prevented by fish oil supplementation. Activity in fish oil supplemented asthmatic rats was an average of 40% higher than in the control asthmatic rats ( $P < 0.05$ ) (Figure 9).

### Glutathione peroxidase activity in BALF

GPx activity in BALF was lower in the asthmatic group compared with non-asthmatic controls (Figure 10). This effect of asthma was prevented by fish oil supplementation. GPx activity in fish oil supplemented asthmatic rats was an average of 13-times higher than in the control asthmatic group ( $P < 0.05$ ) (Figure 10).

### Catalase activity in BALF

CAT activity in BALF was significantly lower for asthmatic rats compared to non-asthmatic controls ((Figure 11). CAT activity in the asthmatic rats supplemented with fish oil was also significantly lower when compared to controls and was not different from that in the

asthmatic group. Fish oil resulted in lower CAT activity in non-asthmatic rats ( $P < 0.001$ ) (Figure 11).

#### Lipid hydroperoxide concentration in lung

Figure 12 shows the lipid hydroperoxide concentration in lung. Asthma significantly increased lung lipid hydroperoxide concentrations compared with non-asthmatic controls ( $P < 0.05$ ). Fish oil supplementation prevented this effect of asthma: fish oil resulted in an average 40% lower lipid hydroperoxide concentration than in the asthmatic group ( $P < 0.001$ ) and this was not different from that seen in the non-asthmatic control group (Figure 12).

#### PAF bioactivity in lung

The PAF bioactivity in the lung increased with the asthmatic inflammation compared with controls ( $P < 0.0001$ ) (Figure 13). Fish oil had no effect on PAF bioactivity (Figure 13).

### Discussion

In the present study asthma increased markers of lung oxidative stress (lipid hydroperoxides and nitrite), lowered the activities of the antioxidant protective enzymes in the lung and increased PAF bioactivity, an indicator of inflammation. The dietary supplementation of asthmatic rats with fish oil was able to counter all of these effects of asthma apart from that on PAF bioactivity. Thus, fish oil had a differential effect on oxidative stress and on PAF bioactivity. Oxidative stress was lower with fish oil, based on the determination of the activities of antioxidant enzymes and nitrogen reactive species and lipid hydroperoxide concentration. SOD plays an important role in cellular protection against oxidative stress [1] by catalyzing the conversion of superoxide anion to hydrogen peroxide [1,2,5]. GPx is essential for removing toxic products of lipid peroxidation and hydrogen peroxide [1,5,8,22], which is continuously generated as a result of the infiltration of inflammatory leukocytes into the lung [8]. The findings of the current study suggest a role for n-3 PUFA from fish oil in controlling lung oxidative stress associated with asthma: the higher activity of antioxidant enzymes may explain the lower concentrations of oxidative stress markers. The lower enzyme activity observed in asthmatic rats is associated with increased ROS and RNS, which lead to modifications of proteins and changes in their functions that are biologically relevant for the initiation and maintenance of inflammation [1]. Such alterations include the reduced antioxidant capacity of SOD, GPx and CAT [1,2,5,7,23] that strongly contributes to oxidative stress in asthmatics. In agreement with the literature [1,4,8,24], in this study we detected that the activity of SOD, GPx and CAT are decreased in the lungs of asthmatic animals. Oxidative stress plays a role directly in several aspects of asthmatic inflammation and can influence the severity of the pathology. Thus, the addition of dietary antioxidants may be a means of protection against noxious oxidizing agents and may inhibit subsequent steps of inflammatory response amplification. Considering that the oxidative stress strongly affects the severity of asthma, the use of antioxidant therapies associated with conventional treatment could improve the quality of life of patients with asthma [9]. Although

CAT activity was not altered by fish oil supplementation, the reversal of the SOD and GPx activities demonstrates an antioxidant action of fish oil in asthma and may indicate an important role of fish oil supplementation in the asthmatic condition, helping in the control of oxidative stress. The antioxidant action of fish oil supplementation has also been shown in previous studies in ulcerative colitis, atherosclerosis and renal disease [25-28]. However, such effects in asthma have not been reported previously. The mechanism of action by which the fish oil exerts its effect in the antioxidant enzymes in asthma may be by a direct action on the enzymes regardless of inflammatory mediators, since in the absence of inflammation the supplement had an effect on the activity of SOD and CAT.

The antioxidant action of fish oil in asthma was also observed in other oxidative stress-related parameters, such as BALF nitrite concentration. Fish oil, when administered to asthmatic animals, decreased nitrite concentration. Nitrite concentration is an indication of production of nitric oxide, which is a precursor of reactive species involved in lipid peroxidation [29-32]. It is likely therefore that the fish oil suppressed the production of extremely toxic free radicals present in asthmatic inflammation, such as the hydroxyl radical, which is formed from nitric oxide. The nitric oxide reacts with superoxide anion generating peroxynitrite [24]. Among various possibilities, from peroxynitrite the hydroxyl radical can be formed [33] and this is a major reactive species responsible for lipid peroxidation [34]. Within this context, the antioxidant action of fish oil on nitrite production is also important for the control of oxidative stress in asthma.

The proposal that fish oil suppressed free radical generation was reinforced by the fact that fish oil supplementation also reduced the concentration of lipid hydroperoxides, a known marker of oxidative stress and lipid peroxidation resulting from asthmatic inflammation [35]. In tissues where oxidative stress occurs, such as in the lung of asthmatics, large amounts of lipid hydroperoxides are formed. In asthmatic animals, in accordance with findings in the literature [12], lung lipid peroxidation was high. In asthma, lipid peroxidation may have detrimental consequences such as airway hyperresponsiveness, plasma overflow, smooth muscle constriction and consequent airway obstruction [12]. Considering the damage caused by lipid peroxidation in asthma, the reduction of nitrite and lipid hydroperoxide production reinforces the antioxidant role of the supplement in this pathology.

Through lipid peroxidation caused by ROS and RNS, the PAF-like lipid can be formed. In the present study, dietary supplementation of asthmatic animals with fish oil had no effect on PAF bioactivity. As fish oil contains a large amount of PUFA that could be substrates for lipid peroxidation, PAF-like lipids could be formed and thereby increase the PAF bioactivity. On the other hand, based on the results presented here oxidative stress may be controlled by supplementation of asthmatic rats with fish oil, and so the PAF bioactivity would decrease with the supplement. In fact, no effect of fish oil on lung PAF bioactivity was seen in asthmatic rats. Thus, it is likely that the observed PAF bioactivity is due to enzymatically formed PAF and not as a result of oxidative stress. In asthma, PAF is involved in bronchial hyperresponsiveness and the consequent bronchoconstriction. In addition, it is associated with an increased vascular permeability and chemotaxis and activation of leukocytes [11,36,37]. When PAF is produced it stimulates the airways cells to secrete leukotriene B<sub>4</sub> [38], a potent proinflammatory mediator that is directly related to airway responsiveness [39]. Since anti-leukotriene drugs are very effective in reversing the hyperresponsiveness observed in asthma, PAF action on bronchial responsiveness may be mediated by leukotrienes. Moreover, in a previous study we found that dietary supplementation of asthmatic animals with fish oil did not affect the force of contraction of airway smooth muscle, which is the main feature that promotes asthmatic exacerbation, an

immediate reaction of bronchoconstriction [40]. Considering that PAF is related to bronchoconstriction, the ineffective action of fish oil on parameters associated to airway smooth muscle function reported in previous studies may be related to its lack of effect on the PAF bioactivity.

In summary, dietary supplementation with fish oil had an antioxidant effect in asthmatic animals, since the supplement was able to increase the activity of SOD and GPx and to reduce the concentrations of nitrite and lipid hydroperoxides. However, fish oil had no effect on the PAF bioactivity, a proinflammatory molecule with a central role in asthmatic inflammation and that is related to oxidative stress. Considering the two-step process - oxidative stress and PAF bioactivity - fish oil exhibited a divergent action in these two aspects of asthmatic inflammation. In conclusion, fish oil supplementation has a dual effect in asthmatic rats, reducing oxidative stress, but having no effect on the PAF bioactivity.

## **Abbreviations**

A - Asthmatic group

AS - Asthmatic group supplemented with fish oil

ASM - Airway smooth muscle

BALF - Bronchoalveolar lavage fluid

BHT - Butylated hydroxytoluene

C - Control group

CAT - Catalase

DMSO - Dimethyl sulfoxide

DNA - Deoxyribonucleic acid

GPx - Glutathione peroxidase

OVA - Ovalbumin

PAF - Platelet activating factor

PBS - Phosphate-buffered saline

PUFA - Polyunsaturated fatty acid(s)

RNS - Reactive nitrogen species

ROS - Reactive oxygen species

S - Supplemented with fish oil group

SOD - Superoxide dismutase

TPP – Triphenylphosphine

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### **Conflict of interest**

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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## Figure Legends

Figure 8. Nitrite concentration in BALF for the following groups: control (C), supplemented with fish oil (S), asthmatic (A), asthmatic supplemented with fish oil (AS). Data are presented as means  $\pm$  SEM. <sup>a</sup>P < 0.0001 vs. Group C and S; <sup>b</sup>P < 0.05 vs. Group C and A.

Figure 9. Superoxide dismutase activity in BALF for the following groups: control (C), supplemented with fish oil (S), asthmatic (A), asthmatic supplemented with fish oil (AS). Data are presented as means  $\pm$  SEM. <sup>a</sup>P < 0.0001 vs. Group C, A and AS; <sup>b</sup>P < 0.05 vs. Group C; <sup>c</sup>P < 0.05 vs. A.

Figure 10. Glutathione peroxidase activity in BALF for the following groups: control (C), supplemented with fish oil (S), asthmatic (A), asthmatic supplemented with fish oil (AS). Data are presented as means  $\pm$  SEM. <sup>a</sup>P < 0.001 vs. Group C and P < 0.0001 vs. Group S; <sup>b</sup>P < 0.05 vs. Group A.

Figure 11. Catalase activity in BALF for the following groups: control (C), supplemented with fish oil (S), asthmatic (A), asthmatic supplemented with fish oil (AS). Data are presented as means  $\pm$  SEM. <sup>a</sup>P < 0.001 vs. Group C.

Figure 12. Lipid hydroperoxide concentration in lung for the following groups: control (C), supplemented with fish oil (S), asthmatic (A), asthmatic supplemented with fish oil (AS). Data are presented as means  $\pm$  SEM. <sup>a</sup>P < 0.05 vs. Group C; <sup>b</sup>P < 0.001 vs. Group A.

Figure 13. PAF bioactivity in lung for the following groups: control (C), supplemented with fish oil (S), asthmatic (A), asthmatic supplemented with fish oil (AS). Data are presented as means  $\pm$  SEM. <sup>a</sup>P < 0.0001 vs. Group C and S; <sup>b</sup>P < 0.001 vs. Group C and P < 0.0001 vs. Group S.

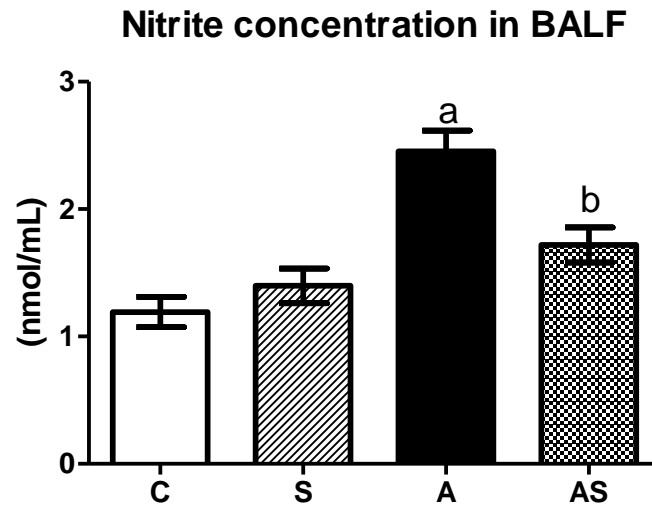


Figure 8. Nitrite concentration in BALF for the following groups: control (C), supplemented with fish oil (S), asthmatic (A), asthmatic supplemented with fish oil (AS). Data are presented as means  $\pm$  SEM. <sup>a</sup>P < 0.0001 vs. Group C and S; <sup>b</sup>P < 0.05 vs. Group C and A.

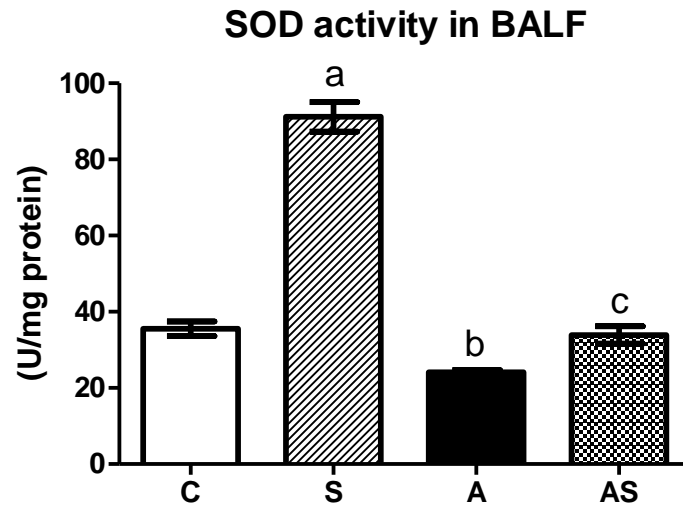


Figure 9. Superoxide dismutase activity in BALF for the following groups: control (C), supplemented with fish oil (S), asthmatic (A), asthmatic supplemented with fish oil (AS). Data are presented as means  $\pm$  SEM. <sup>a</sup>P < 0.0001 vs. Group C, A and AS; <sup>b</sup>P < 0.05 vs. Group C; <sup>c</sup>P < 0.05 vs. A.

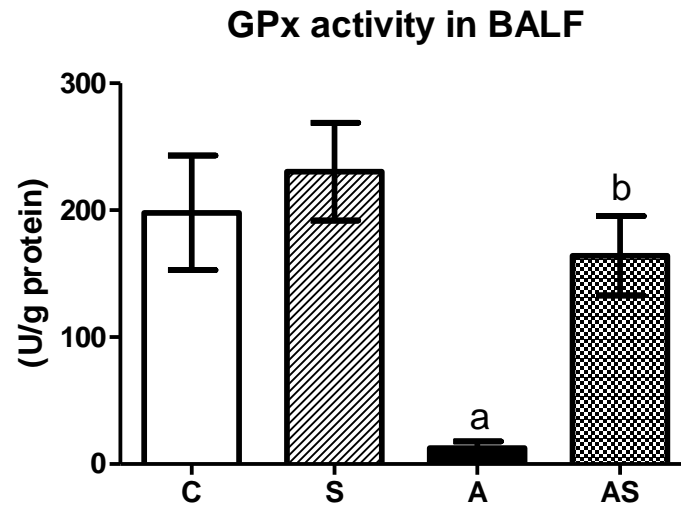


Figure 10. Glutathione peroxidase activity in BALF for the following groups: control (C), supplemented with fish oil (S), asthmatic (A), asthmatic supplemented with fish oil (AS). Data are presented as means  $\pm$  SEM. <sup>a</sup>P < 0.001 vs. Group C and P < 0.0001 vs. Group S; <sup>b</sup>P < 0.05 vs. Group A.

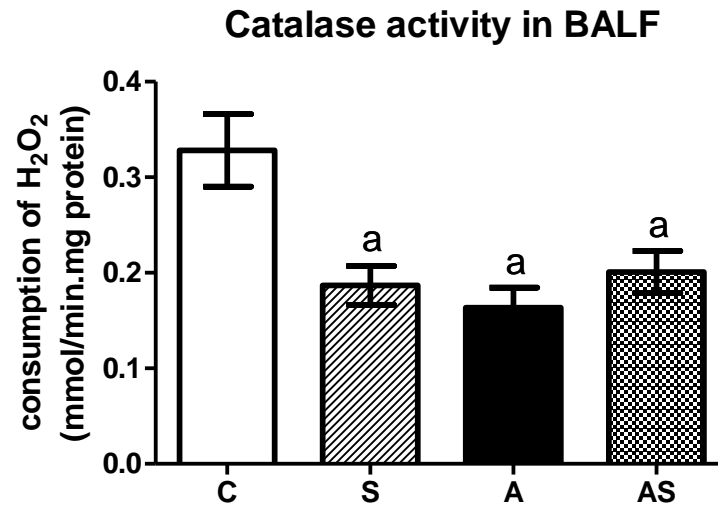


Figure 11. Catalase activity in BALF for the following groups: control (C), supplemented with fish oil (S), asthmatic (A), asthmatic supplemented with fish oil (AS). Data are presented as means  $\pm$  SEM. <sup>a</sup>P < 0.001 vs. Group C.

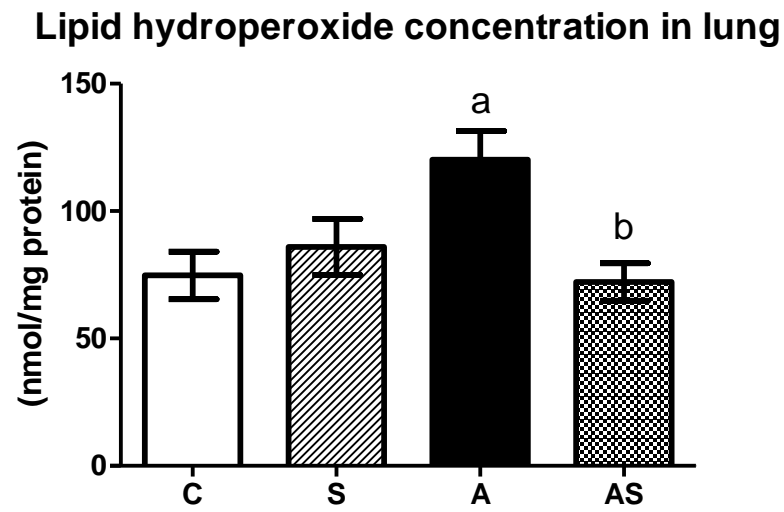


Figure 12. Lipid hydroperoxide concentration in lung for the following groups: control (C), supplemented with fish oil (S), asthmatic (A), asthmatic supplemented with fish oil (AS). Data are presented as means  $\pm$  SEM. <sup>a</sup>P < 0.05 vs. Group C; <sup>b</sup>P < 0.001 vs. Group A.

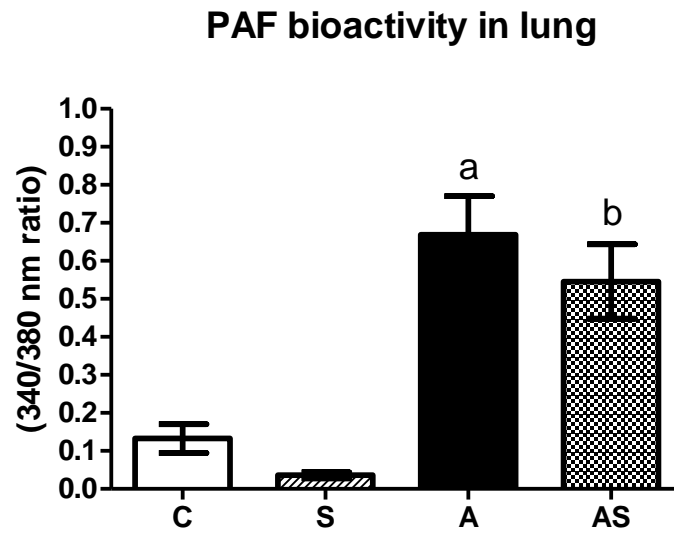


Figure 13. PAF bioactivity in lung for the following groups: control (C), supplemented with fish oil (S), asthmatic (A), asthmatic supplemented with fish oil (AS). Data are presented as means  $\pm$  SEM. <sup>a</sup>P < 0.0001 vs. Group C and S; <sup>b</sup>P < 0.001 vs. Group C and P < 0.0001 vs. Group S.



## The prevention of oxidative stress improve asthmatic inflammation

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### ABSTRACT

Asthma is a disease characterized by airway chronic inflammation and bronchial hyperactivity, involving the imbalance of oxidative and antioxidative agents. There is an increased free radical generation and a decreased antioxidant enzyme activity, which correlate with the severity of the disease. The oxidative stress triggers specific physiopathological changes in the respiratory tract as a result of proinflammatory molecule formation, such as isoprostanes and PAF-like lipids. The synthesis of these mediators is dependent on the availability of lipid substrates, such as PUFAs, which are present in cell membranes. Therefore, lipid oxidation may have an important role in the perpetuation and amplification of the asthmatic inflammatory response. This article will make considerations about how oxidative stress contributes to asthma pathogenesis.

**Keywords:** Asthma; Oxidative Stress; Inflammation; Lipid Mediators

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Asthma is a chronic inflammatory disease associated with oxidative and antioxidative disequilibrium. High oxygen levels of the pulmonary environment render it susceptible to oxidative stress reactions. Products generated in this condition, such as reactive oxidative species (ROS) and reactive nitrogen species (RNS), are biomarkers for disease progression [1].

ROS can be formed in metabolic reactions, such as in the mitochondrial electron transport during respiration. Ozone and air particulates, including pollutants such as cigarette smoke, represent another source of ROS generation that affects airways [2]. Regarding the airway inflammatory process such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, there is an increased production of ROS by inflammatory cells activation [3]. Therefore, ROS production, irrespective of its origin,

becomes an important focus for therapeutic intervention.

This review will discuss the involvement of oxidative stress on asthmatic inflammation, aiming to consider the following question: does the modification of pulmonary oxidative status could affect the pathological feature of asthma? The displayed question is relevant since oxidative stress significantly influences the pathogenesis of asthma. It makes one take into account the requirement of an antioxidant therapy in association to the traditional drug treatments.

### 2. GENERATION OF LIPID MEDIATORS IN ENZYMATIC AND NON-ENZYMATIC PATHWAYS

#### 2.1. Enzymatic Pathways

The main lipid mediators of asthmatic inflammation produced from arachidonic acid are prostaglandins, leukotrienes, thromboxanes and prostacyclins. It is well known that the bioactive eicosanoids biosynthesis is precisely regulated by several enzymes. Phospholipase A<sub>2</sub> hydrolyzes the *sn*-2 ester bond of membrane phospholipids, releasing arachidonate. This fatty acid is then metabolized by enzymatic systems as cyclooxygenases (COX) and lipoxygenases (LOX) that results in aforementioned eicosanoids formation [4].

Besides COX and LOX-derived substances, another lipid mediator that plays a central role in asthma is the Platelet Activating Factor (PAF). PAF synthesis is a highly regulated enzymatic pathway and usually involves a two-step mechanism [5]. There is an initial esterification of a lysophosphatidylcholine at the *sn*-2 glycerol skeleton position. Later, bioactive PAF is produced by acetyl transferase acetylation [6]. PAF is a biologically active phospholipid [6] and one of the most potent proinflammatory mediator identified to date [7]. The correlation of PAF and asthmatic pulmonary inflammation is pointed out by the demonstration that PAF level is increased in asthmatic patients and decreased after immunotherapy [7-9].

## 2.2. Non-Enzymatic Pathways

The oxidative stress observed in asthma makes the environment conducive to oxidative reactions producing omega-6/omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFAs)-derived inflammatory mediators [10]. Thus, one may consider that non-enzymatic reactions or without regulation by antioxidant systems may be an important source of inflammatory mediators in asthma.

Lipoperoxidation occurs as a chain reaction initiated by free radicals formation on the fatty acid esterified to the phospholipid [11]. It propagates by reacting to an oxygen molecule and result in a lipid peroxy radical, which is capable of abstracting hydrogen from another PUFA [12]. A great quantity of lipid hydroperoxides is produced, which are degraded in subsequent reactions [13]. Thus, various chemical species are formed, among them some species with proinflammatory activity [6], as isoprostanes and PAF-like molecules.

**Isoprostanes.** The isoprostanes are prostaglandin-like compounds formed from the free radical-catalyzed peroxidation of PUFAs, especially arachidonic acid, without the action of COX [1]. Their structural similarity to prostanoids (prostaglandins and thromboxanes) make them capable to activate thromboxane (receptor TP) [1, 13-14] and prostaglandins receptors (receptors FP, EP1-4) [1], explaining their biological activity [13,14]. Therefore, isoprostanes may exert many physiopathological effects, such as airway smooth muscle tonus regulation and hyperresponsiveness [1,13], pulmonary vasoconstriction [14] and plasma exudation in alveolar microenvironment [13]. These effects are compatible with asthma features. Indeed, high levels of F2-isoprostanes have been observed in animal models of asthma and in asthmatic patients. Additionally, the severity of asthma is positively associated with the concentration of 8-iso-PGF2 $\alpha$  (8-iso-prostaglandin F2 $\alpha$ ) [13].

Isoprostanes modulate airway smooth muscle cell function by the regulation of the chemokines production. It was shown that they may promote the increase in G-CSF-induced (granulocyte colony stimulating factor) IL-1 $\beta$  in human airway smooth muscle cells [1]. This is a significant role of isoprostanes, since it represents an indirect pathway of inflammatory response amplification. Other important activities of isoprostanes in the inflammatory process are: stimulation of macrophage and neutrophil adhesion to endothelial cells, augmentation of macrophage IL-8 expression and increase of the vascular permeability [1]. Therefore, the complexity and multiplicity of isoprostanes actions may represent a focus of interest in the research for asthma management and new treatment therapies.

**PAF-like.** A PAF mimetics molecule with important proinflammatory effects generated non-enzymatically from

phosphatidylcholine. Some decades ago, Smiley [15] carried out an experiment consisted of 1-palmitoyl-2-arachidonoyl-sn-glycero-3-phosphocholine fragmentation by an uncontrolled free radical-catalyzed reaction. This process generated several lipid fragments, which were capable of activating polymorphonuclear cells. The hydrolysis of the *sn*-2 residue of these fragments by PAF acetylhydrolase avoided their biological activity. In the same study, it was found that neutrophil activation is completely blocked by a specific antagonist of PAF receptor. Therefore, Smiley [15] evidenced that oxidation of phospholipids containing acyl residues (PUFA) at the *sn*-2 position generate molecules with PAF-like biological activity. In their study, Smiley [15] already suggested that PAF-like phospholipids may be generated under pathological conditions in which ROS play an essential role [15]. Currently, the participation of PAF-like molecules in many conditions is well established, such as in atherosclerosis and asthma [8,16].

In spite of being less potent than PAF, PAF-like lipids are generated in high quantities and in an uncontrolled manner, rendering their action important in inflammation [17]. In asthma, the most important immediate activities of PAF include leukocyte chemotaxis and activation, increase of vascular permeability, vasoconstriction, bronchoconstriction and bronchial hyperresponsiveness [5,7, 8,18]. PAF also has long term effects [7] that determine the severity of asthma. It was demonstrated that in chronic inflammation, PAF induces airway vascular remodeling, calciform cell hyperplasia and mucin gene expression [7].

## 3. ASTHMA: A DISEASE ASSOCIATED WITH OXIDATIVE STRESS

In asthma, the inflammatory response is accompanied by the generation of reactive oxygen and nitrogen species (ROS and RNS) [19-21], a process that is regulated by inflammatory mediators. Among the ROS and RNS are superoxide anion, hydrogen peroxide, hydroxyl radical, perchloric acid, nitric oxide (NO) and peroxynitrite [19, 20,22,23]. ROS and RNS are produced by inflammatory cells, including eosinophils, neutrophils and macrophages. These oxidants participate in disease progression, especially during the exacerbation of asthmatic inflammation [19,22]. The combination of these facts, including increase in ROS and RNS, oxidative stress and non-enzymatic production of inflammatory mediators, give us indication of the oxidative imbalance importance in asthma.

**Antioxidant defense.** Another feature found in asthma is the loss of antioxidant defenses [19,20,22,24,25]. Lungs and blood have many enzymatic and non-enzymatic antioxidants, like glutathione peroxidase (GPx), superoxide



dismutase (SOD), catalase (CAT), heme oxygenase, glutaredoxin, thioredoxin, peroxiredoxin, glutathione, carotenoids, vitamins E, A and C—all with the purpose of counteracting oxidants toxicity [19,20,25]. Increased ROS and RNS lead to structural and functional protein modification that are biologically relevant for inflammation initiation and maintenance [19]. Such alterations include the reduced activity of SOD, CAT and GPx [19,21-23,25]. Consequently, ROS and RNS are generated in large quantities in the lungs of asthmatic subjects that can overwhelm the antioxidant system activity of the organism. It leads to an uncontrolled production of new reactive species even more deleterious to the organism. In the absence of antioxidant defenses, the reactive species cause many forms of cell lesions, such as damage to DNA and to lipid membranes [21,22,26].

**Airway smooth muscle.** Airway smooth muscle importance goes beyond its contractile function, since it can contribute to the chronic inflammatory process and participate in the remodeling of airways [3]. Its relevance derives from the fact that smooth muscle cells can express and produce cytokines and chemokines [3,13], interact with extracellular matrix proteins and, in some circumstances, produce collagen [3]. In the context of oxidative stress, it can generate inflammatory mediators that interfere with parameters such as: smooth muscle contraction, airway hyperreactivity, mucus hypersecretion, epithelial desquamation and vascular exudation [13]. Therefore, the effects of oxidative stress on airway smooth muscle are significant in the chronic inflammatory process observed in asthma.

**Intracellular signaling pathways.** Under pathological conditions, intense ROS production by cells can cause changes in signal transduction and in gene expression [27]. Oxidative stress activates transcription factors, such as NF- $\kappa$ B and AP-1, and signaling pathways that culminate with the expression of several proinflammatory genes [3]. Some signaling pathways activated by ROS are: extracellular signal regulated kinases (ERKs), c-Jun N-terminal kinases (JNKs), p38 MAP kinases (MAPKs), Protein Kinase C (PKC), Phosphatidylinositol 3-kinases (PI3K/Akt) and tyrosine kinase growth factor receptors [27]. Thus, ROS play an important physiopathological role as second messenger [27], with changes in inflammatory response.

In summary, in asthmatic inflammation there is an increased ROS and RNS production and a decreased antioxidant system activity, which has consequences in airway smooth muscles reactivity. These reactive species also act as markers of the asthma intensity and exacerbation, in addition to being correlated with disease severity. Its relevance as a biomarker is justified by the fact that they interfere with parameters that characterize the asthmatic inflammation.

#### 4. PERSPECTIVES

As discussed above we conclude that oxidative stress can interfere directly in several aspects of asthmatic inflammation, increasing the severity of the pathology. If PU-FAs are components of membrane phospholipids, the attack of these structures by reactive species can generate proinflammatory molecules, which are key regulators of allergic pulmonary inflammation. In this way, the manipulation of diets can have a key role in regulating the asthmatic condition by changing the availability of lipids susceptible to oxidation by those oxidative agents, and consequently generated proinflammatory molecules. Furthermore, oxidative stress may result not only of increased oxidative species, but also by a reduction in antioxidant activity. Therefore, the association of antioxidant therapy to the conventional treatment may be an alternative to improve patient response to therapy. Two considerations need to be made to give more consistency to our suggestion. 1) The lung has the peculiarity of the high flow oxygen which favors oxidation reactions and the generation of proinflammatory molecules. 2) Epidemiological data suggest that low vegetable and fruit intake are associated with the development of asthma [28]. Thus, antioxidant addition to the diet could protect against the noxious oxidant agents, as well as inhibiting subsequent steps of inflammatory response amplification, decreasing the severity and the perpetuation of asthmatic inflammation. Accordingly, the establishment of protocols of antioxidant therapy associated with conventional treatment may significantly improve the asthmatic patients quality life.

If oxidative stress affect asthma pathology as is stated in this review, a future perspective could guide studies in terms of new technologies for antioxidants distribution, as through stem cells technology and gene therapy on redox system.

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## The Effectiveness of Fish Oil Supplementation in Asthmatic Rats is Limited by an Inefficient Action on ASM Function

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**Abstract** Episodes of acute exacerbation are the major clinical feature of asthma and therefore represent an important focus for developing novel therapies for this disease. There are many reports that the n-3 fatty acids found in fish oil exert anti-inflammatory effects, but there are few studies of the action of fish oil on airway smooth muscle (ASM) function. In the present investigation, we evaluated the effect of fish oil supplementation on smooth muscle force of contraction in ovalbumin-induced asthmatic Wistar rats, and its consequences on static lung compliance, mucus production, leukocyte chemotaxis and production of proinflammatory cytokines. Fish oil supplementation suppressed the infiltration of inflammatory cells

into the lung in asthmatic animals ( $2.04 \pm 0.19 \times 10^6$  cells vs.  $3.33 \pm 0.43 \times 10^6$  cells in the control asthmatic group;  $P < 0.05$ ). Static lung compliance increased with fish oil supplementation in asthmatic rats ( $0.640 \pm 0.053$  mL/cm H<sub>2</sub>O vs.  $0.399 \pm 0.043$  mL/cm H<sub>2</sub>O;  $P < 0.05$ ). However, fish oil did not prevent asthma-associated lung eosinophilia and did not affect the concentrations of tumor necrosis factor- $\alpha$  and interleukin-1 $\beta$  in lung tissue or the proportion of the airways obliterated with mucus. Fish oil had no effect on the force of contraction in asthmatic rats in response to acetylcholine ( $3.026 \pm 0.274$  mN vs.  $2.813 \pm 0.364$  mN in the control asthmatic group). In conclusion, although fish oil exerts some benefits in this model of asthma, its effectiveness appears to be limited by an inefficient action on airway smooth muscle function.

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Inflammation · Airway smooth muscle · Cytokine

### Abbreviations

A	Asthmatic group
Ach	Acetylcholine
AFO	Asthmatic fish oil group
Ai	Airway internal area
Amo	Airway outer muscle area
Ao	Airway outer area
ASM	Airway smooth muscle
BALF	Bronchoalveolar lavage fluid
C	Control group
FO	Fish oil group
IL-1 $\beta$	Interleukin 1 $\beta$
Iso	Isoproterenol
OVA	Ovalbumin
PBS	Phosphate-buffered saline
Pi	Airway internal perimeter

Pmo	Airway outer muscle perimeter
Po	Airway outer perimeter
PUFA	Polyunsaturated fatty acid(s)
SEM	Standard error of the mean
TNF- $\alpha$	Tumor necrosis factor- $\alpha$
W <sub>ai</sub>	Inner wall area
W <sub>ao</sub>	Adventitial wall area
WAT	Total wall area

## Introduction

The anti-inflammatory effects of n-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFA), found in oily fish and in fish oil supplements, have been extensively studied [1–4]. These effects often involve the incorporation of the n-3 PUFA into cell membranes in order to modulate availability of substrates for syntheses of weak inflammatory eicosanoids and proresolution mediators termed resolvins and protectins [1–4]. In addition, recent studies suggest that n-3 PUFA act to prevent activation of the nuclear factor kappa B (NF $\kappa$ B) signaling pathway, probably by modulating the responsiveness of receptors to inflammatory stimuli, so reducing expression of inflammatory genes [1–4]. As a result of these anti-inflammatory actions fish oil has been used with some success in rheumatoid arthritis, ulcerative colitis, Crohn's disease and psoriasis [2]. However, its effectiveness in asthma has been inconsistent and limited to date [2, 5].

Asthma is an allergic disease characterized by airway hyper-responsiveness, reversible bronchoconstriction, mucus hypersecretion and eosinophilia [6–8]. When in contact with an allergen, the asthmatic patient presents episodes of acute exacerbations, an immediate reaction of bronchoconstriction and concomitant release of proinflammatory mediators. During the occurrence of these episodes, airways obstruction is established as a result of the concentric contraction of smooth muscle, airway wall edema and luminal obstruction with mucus [7]. Acute exacerbation is the major clinical feature of asthma and therefore represents an important focus for the development of novel therapies for this disease. The study of the effect of potential treatments, such as n-3 PUFA, on the contractile properties of airway smooth muscle (ASM) may reveal novel mechanisms of action by which the treatments could interfere with respiratory mechanics.

The hyperresponsiveness and bronchial constriction observed in asthma essentially depend on the ASM functionality [8]. The ASM contractile properties are modulated by inflammatory cytokines, present in high concentrations in asthma. Among them are interleukin-1 $\beta$  (IL-1 $\beta$ ) and tumor necrosis factor- $\alpha$  (TNF- $\alpha$ ), secreted by leukocytes

and smooth muscle. Both IL-1 $\beta$  and TNF- $\alpha$  can promote an increase in bronchial responsiveness and in ASM contractility [8–10]. These cytokines promote the recruitment and activation of inflammatory cells, contributing to the perpetuation of inflammatory response [11–13]. IL-1 $\beta$  induces mucus secretion, T-lymphocyte activation and neutrophil recruitment [9, 12]. TNF- $\alpha$  is a chemoattractant for neutrophils and eosinophils, and induces the expression of adhesion molecules and vascular permeability [11, 13]. Thus, the production of these cytokines is related to the ASM functionality and the inflammatory response.

Despite the on-going study of the antiinflammatory effects of n-3 PUFA, there are few studies of the effect of fish oil on ASM functionality. In the present investigation, we evaluated the effect of fish oil on smooth muscle force of contraction, its consequences on static lung compliance, mucus production, leukocyte chemotaxis and proinflammatory cytokine production. We hypothesized that fish oil supplementation in asthmatic rats has a role in ASM functionality and in related parameters, which could explain, at least in part, the impact of fish oil in asthma.

## Materials and Methods

### Reagents

TNF- $\alpha$  and IL-1 $\beta$  ELISA kits were purchased from eBioscience (San Diego, California, USA). Fish oil capsules were donated by Herbarium (Colombo, Paraná, Brazil). Ovalbumin (OVA) (Grade II), aluminium hydroxide (Al(OH)<sub>3</sub>), thiopental sodium, MayGrünwald and Giemsa solutions and all other reagents were purchased from Sigma (St. Louis, Missouri, USA).

### Study Protocol

Male Wistar rats (aged 8 weeks and weighing 220  $\pm$  30 g) were purchased from the Biotery of Universidade Federal do Paraná, Curitiba, Brazil. Rats were allowed free access to water and food (52 % by weight of carbohydrates, 21 % by weight of proteins and 4 % by weight of total lipids; Nuvilab CRI, Nuvital Nutrientes Ltda, Curitiba, Paraná, Brazil), and were maintained at a room temperature of approximately 23 °C with 55 % relative humidity and 12 h inverted light/dark cycle. In each experiment, the rats were randomly divided into four groups: control (C), fish oil (FO), asthmatic (A) and asthmatic fish oil (AFO), with four rats in each group. Daily fish oil supplementation was started on day 1 (FO and AFO). Fish oil was administered into the mouth using a micropipette at a daily dose of 1 g/kg of body weight for 21 days. Dose and period of supplementation were based on previous studies in rats in which effects of fish oil were



demonstrated [14–17] and in which n-3 fatty acids incorporation occurred in a short-term period [18], respectively. The body weight of the rats was recorded throughout this period in every 2 days and was not different between the groups (data not shown). On days 5 and 12, allergic sensitization was performed on A and AFO rats by a subcutaneous injection of OVA (1 mg/mL) complexed with 20 mg of  $\text{Al}(\text{OH})_3$  adjuvant in phosphate-buffered saline (PBS). C and FO rats received only the adjuvant in PBS. On days 18, 19 and 20 the rats were challenged by exposure to an aerosol of 5 % OVA diluted in sterile PBS using an ultrasonic nebulizer (Ultraneb) for 30 min. Twenty-four hours after the final challenge the animals were given an intraperitoneal injection of thiopental (20 mg/kg), and euthanized by an injection of potassium chloride (2 mmol/kg). The bronchoalveolar lavage fluid (BALF) was collected for enumeration of total leukocytes and leukocyte subsets. After BALF collection the trachea was removed for the isolation of a tracheal ring. Lungs were collected for determination of IL-1 $\beta$  and TNF- $\alpha$ . Animals that were not used for BALF collection were tracheostomized for the measurement of static lung compliance and after that the lungs were fixed for histological analyses. All procedures were approved by the institutional Animal Ethics Committee (protocol number 468), in accordance with the Brazilian College on Animal Experimentation (COBEA) guidelines.

#### BALF Collection and Cell Counts

Rats were tracheostomized and BALF was collected by cannulating the upper part of the trachea. The lungs were gently lavaged with 5 mL of PBS. This procedure was repeated 10 times for each animal and 90–95 % of the installed volume was recovered each time. Samples were kept on ice and then centrifuged for 8 min at 290g and 4°C. After centrifugation, pellets were suspended in 500  $\mu\text{L}$  of PBS, for total and differential cell counts. The total number of cells was determined by light microscopy analysis of the cell suspension (at 400 $\times$  magnification) using trypan blue (0.05 %) for dead cell exclusion and a hemocytometer. BALF cells were prepared and stained with May-Grünwald/Giemsa and the slides were subjected to blinded manual differential cell counts in which 200 cells were counted per slide using light microscopy analysis (at 1,000 $\times$  magnification). The percentage of different cell populations was determined and reported as eosinophils, neutrophils, macrophages and lymphocytes.

#### Determination of the Levels of IL-1 $\beta$ and TNF- $\alpha$ in Lung Tissues

After BALF collection, the rats were thoracotomized. The lower pulmonary right lobe of the lungs were removed,

washed in PBS and frozen in liquid nitrogen before storage at  $-80^\circ\text{C}$  for later measurement of the levels of IL-1 $\beta$  and TNF- $\alpha$ . Lungs were homogenized in PBS (100 mg tissue/mL PBS) and the levels of IL-1 $\beta$  and TNF- $\alpha$  were determined using commercially available ELISA kits according to the manufacturer's protocols.

#### Airway Smooth Muscle Responsiveness to Acetylcholine (Ach) or Isoproterenol (Iso)

The experimental model performed with the muscle obtained from the tracheal ring is a classical measurement of the functional alterations in the ASM [19]. The isolated tracheal ring was placed in Normal Ringer solution (NaCl 110 mM, KCl 4 mM,  $\text{CaCl}_2$  2 mM,  $\text{MgCl}_2$  2 mM, TRIS-MA 10 mM, glucose 1 mM, pH 7.4) pre-gassed with pure  $\text{O}_2$ . A single tracheal ring was cut in the medial axis of the cartilage and the ends were fixed using clamps; one end was connected to a MLT0420 Force Transducer (AD Instruments, Bella Vista, Australia) and the other to a movable arm, to adjust the length of the preparation (model 300B; Cambridge Technologies). This preparation was mounted for maximal contraction or relaxation recording in 10 mL tissue baths at 37 °C containing Normal Ringer solution continuously gassed with pure  $\text{O}_2$ . Tension was assessed using a Beckman (type RM) chart recorder. The preparation was stretched to 120 % of the slack length. The maximal contraction was obtained by adding acetylcholine (150  $\mu\text{M}$ ) to the bath. After the preparation reached the maximal contraction, relaxation was induced by adding isoproterenol (100  $\mu\text{M}$ ) into the bath. This protocol was used for all groups studied. Values of force are expressed in mN.

#### Morphometric Analysis of Airway Wall Dimensions and Inflammation

Lungs were collected and immediately fixed in Karnovsky. Serial sections (3- $\mu\text{m}$  sections taken every 100  $\mu\text{m}$ ) of paraffin-embedded lungs were prepared and stained with hematoxylin and eosin. Each section was analysed by a light microscope (Axio-Imager Z2 Zeiss) coupled to a computer and the morphometric measures were taken with the MetaSystem program. All airways that were cut in a cross section in which the short vs. long diameter ratio at the smooth muscle border was  $>0.6$  were examined. The measurements included (1) airway internal perimeter ( $P_i$ ) and area ( $A_i$ ); (2) outer muscle perimeter ( $P_{mo}$ ) and area ( $A_{mo}$ ); and (3) airway outer perimeter ( $P_o$ ) and area ( $A_o$ ), as previously described [20]. Inner wall area ( $W_{Ai}$ ), adventitial wall area ( $W_{Ao}$ ), and total wall area ( $W_{AT}$ ) were calculated as  $W_{Ai} = A_{mo} - A_i$ ,  $W_{Ao} = A_o - A_{mo}$ , and  $W_{AT} = A_o - A_i$ . The airway wall thickness

was calculated as  $WAT/Ai^*$ , where  $Ai^*$  is the ideal area of the lumen of the relaxed airway calculated as  $Ai^* = Pi^2/4\pi$ , used to normalize airway wall area and minimize differences caused by the size of the bronchioles. The amount of inflammation was assessed by the measurement of the percentage of the mucus-obiterated area from the inner airway area ( $Ai$ ) of the bronchial sections.

### Static Lung Compliance

The animals were tracheostomized for the insertion of a cannula, to the level of the midthorax, coupled to a pressure transducer (AD instruments Bella Vista, Australia). To measure intrapulmonary pressure, the lung of each animal was inflated with 2-mL steps up to 14 mL and the pressure was recorded using an AD/DA converter connected to a PC (power lab system, AD instruments). Static Lung Compliance was determined as  $C[st] = \Delta V/\Delta P$ , where  $\Delta V$  is the variance of the volume of air injected in the lung and  $\Delta P$  is the variance of pressure measured for each animal.

### Statistical Analysis

Data are expressed as means  $\pm$  SEM. Data were analysed by one-way ANOVA with post-hoc comparisons between groups using Tukey's test, or, when the data were not normally distributed, Kruskal–Wallis test with Dunn's post-hoc test. Analyses were conducted using Prism 4.0 software (GraphPad, San Diego, CA, USA). In all cases differences were considered significant for  $P < 0.05$ .

## Results

### Total and Differential Cell Counts in BALF

Table 1 shows the total number of cells and numbers of different cell populations in BALF from all groups. In asthmatic rats (A group) the total number of cells in BALF

was significantly higher than in non-asthmatic controls, indicating a significant infiltration of leukocytes, which is a feature of asthmatic inflammation. Fish oil supplementation suppressed this infiltration of inflammatory cells in asthmatic rats ( $P < 0.05$  vs. A group). Infiltrating cells included macrophages, lymphocytes, neutrophils and eosinophils. Asthma resulted in a significantly higher number of eosinophils in BALF, a characteristic of the asthmatic inflammation seen in this model, and this number was even greater after fish oil supplementation ( $P < 0.5$  vs. A group). The number of neutrophils was higher in BALF in the A group compared to the non-asthmatic group. However, although neutrophils were numerically lower in the AFO group than in the A group, the difference was not significant ( $P > 0.05$ ), suggesting that fish oil supplementation did not alter the neutrophilic infiltration in the asthmatic lungs. The numbers of macrophages and lymphocytes were not significantly different between the groups, although again numbers of both these cell types were numerically lower in the AFO group than in the A group.

### Concentrations of $TNF-\alpha$ and $IL-1\beta$ in Lung Tissue

Lung tissue  $TNF-\alpha$  and  $IL-1\beta$  were higher in the asthmatic groups compared with non-asthmatic controls and were not altered by fish oil supplementation (Figs. 1, 2).

### Airway Smooth Muscle Responsiveness to Acetylcholine (Ach) or Isoproterenol (Iso)

The functional response of the smooth muscle from the tracheal ring to Ach is shown in Fig. 3a. The force of contraction was significantly lower for the smooth muscle from asthmatic rats ( $2.813 \pm 0.364$  mN) compared to non-asthmatic controls ( $5.144 \pm 0.273$  mN,  $P < 0.05$ ). The force of contraction in the AFO group was also significantly lower ( $3.026 \pm 0.274$  mN,  $P < 0.05$ ) when compared to non-asthmatic controls but was not different from that in the

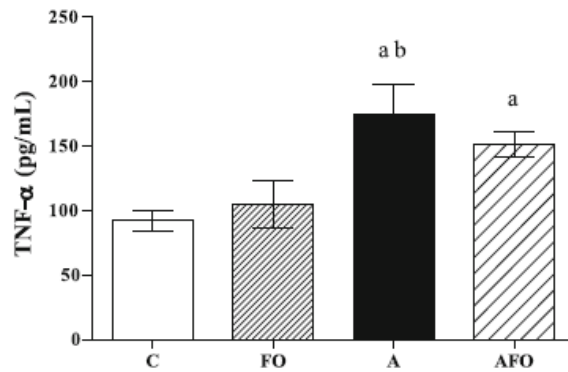
**Table 1** Total and differential cell counts in BALF from non-asthmatic and asthmatic rats supplemented or not with fish oil

	Groups			
	C	FO	A	AFO
Total cells ( $\times 10^6/\text{mL} \pm \text{SEM}$ )	$1.29 \pm 0.12$ $n = 30$	$1.74 \pm 0.19$ $n = 18$	$3.33 \pm 0.43^a$ $n = 22$	$2.04 \pm 0.19^b$ $n = 17$
Eosinophils ( $\times 10^5/\text{mL} \pm \text{SEM}$ )	$0.07 \pm 0.02$ $n = 11$	$0.11 \pm 0.06$ $n = 8$	$3.37 \pm 0.64^a$ $n = 9$	$6.40 \pm 0.83^{ab}$ $n = 7$
Macrophages ( $\times 10^5/\text{mL} \pm \text{SEM}$ )	$8.68 \pm 1.75$ $n = 11$	$10.44 \pm 1.65$ $n = 8$	$10.76 \pm 1.78$ $n = 9$	$7.05 \pm 1.20$ $n = 7$
Lymphocytes ( $\times 10^5/\text{mL} \pm \text{SEM}$ )	$0.57 \pm 0.14$ $n = 11$	$0.50 \pm 0.10$ $n = 8$	$3.78 \pm 1.98$ $n = 9$	$0.57 \pm 0.22$ $n = 7$
Neutrophils ( $\times 10^5/\text{mL} \pm \text{SEM}$ )	$0.35 \pm 0.18$ $n = 11$	$0.67 \pm 0.41$ $n = 8$	$2.95 \pm 1.11^a$ $n = 9$	$0.72 \pm 0.27$ $n = 7$

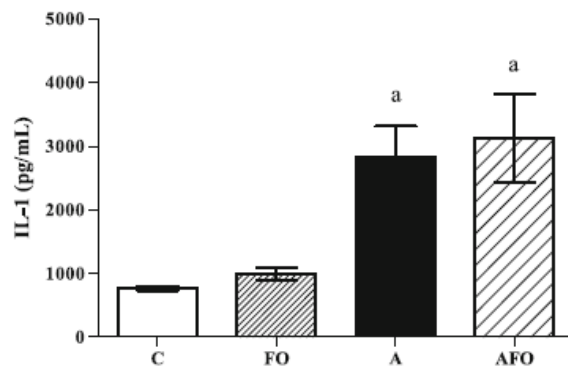
<sup>a</sup>  $P < 0.05$  vs. C

<sup>b</sup>  $P < 0.05$  vs. A



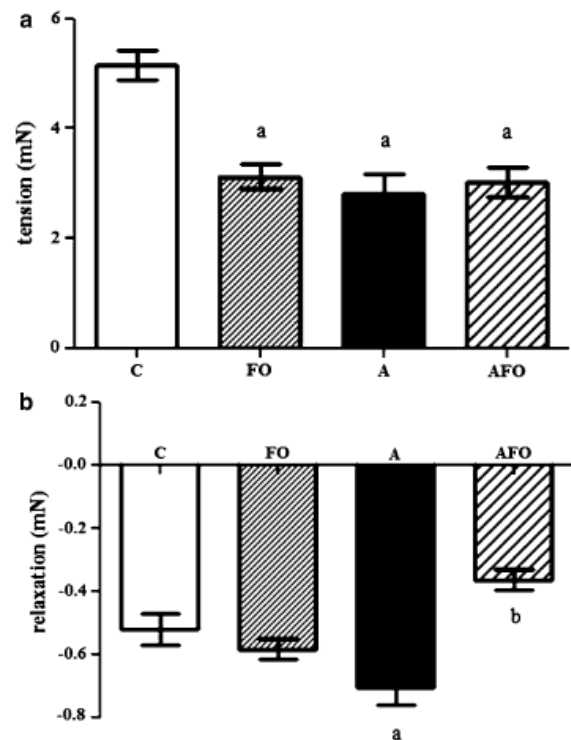


**Fig. 1** TNF- $\alpha$  concentrations in lung tissue homogenates obtained from non-asthmatic and asthmatic rats supplemented or not with fish oil. Data are reported as means  $\pm$  SEM from C ( $n = 30$ ), FO ( $n = 15$ ), A ( $n = 9$ ) and AFO ( $n = 17$ ) groups. <sup>a</sup> $P < 0.05$  vs. C; <sup>b</sup> $P < 0.05$  vs. FO



**Fig. 2** IL-1 $\beta$  concentrations in lung tissue homogenates obtained from non-asthmatic and asthmatic rats supplemented or not with fish oil. Data are reported as means  $\pm$  SEM from C ( $n = 8$ ), FO ( $n = 9$ ), A ( $n = 11$ ) and AFO ( $n = 12$ ) groups. <sup>a</sup> $P < 0.05$  vs. C

A group, suggesting that fish oil supplementation has little action on airway smooth muscle function in asthmatic rats. However, the airway smooth muscle response to Ach in the non-asthmatic FO group was also significantly lower ( $3.120 \pm 0.215$  mN,  $P < 0.05$ ) than in the controls, which shows that fish oil supplementation has direct effects on smooth muscle function in the absence of asthma. Figure 3b shows the functional response of the smooth muscle from the tracheal ring to Iso, a  $\beta_2$ -adrenergic receptor agonist. The relaxation of the smooth muscle was significantly higher in asthmatic rats ( $0.707 \pm 0.029$  mN) compared to non-asthmatic controls ( $0.522 \pm 0.051$  mN,  $P < 0.05$ ). Fish oil supplementation in asthmatic rats significantly reduced ( $0.364 \pm 0.032$  mN) the relaxation of the smooth muscle compared to the asthmatic group.



**Fig. 3** Force of contraction (a) and relaxation (b) of airway smooth muscle measured in response to  $150 \mu\text{M}$  of Ach and to  $100 \mu\text{M}$  of Iso, respectively. a Data are means  $\pm$  SEM from C ( $n = 8$ ), FO ( $n = 6$ ), A ( $n = 8$ ) and AFO ( $n = 8$ ) groups; <sup>a</sup> $P < 0.05$  vs. C. b Data are means  $\pm$  SEM from C ( $n = 12$ ), FO ( $n = 8$ ), A ( $n = 8$ ) and AFO ( $n = 4$ ) groups; <sup>a</sup> $P < 0.05$  vs. C; <sup>b</sup> $P < 0.05$  vs. A

#### Morphometric Analysis of Airway Wall Dimensions and Inflammation

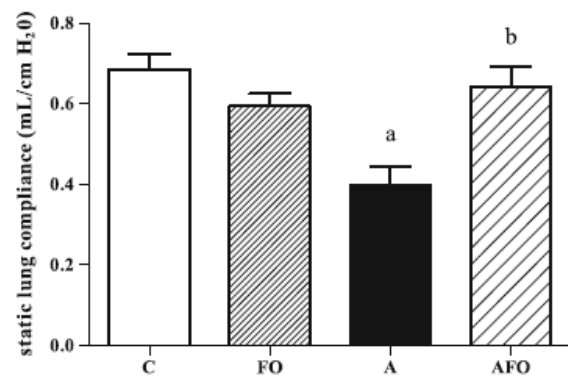
Table 2 summarizes data from morphometric analysis. There were no significant differences in number and size of bronchioles among the four experimental groups, indicating no significant biases in terms of airways selection. Normalized airway wall dimensions were not different between the groups studied, indicating that the thickness of the smooth muscle layer or the adventitial layer were not altered by either asthma or fish oil. The area that was obliterated with mucus was determined as percentage of the internal area of the bronchioles. The mean from the obliterated area was significantly higher in the A and AFO groups when compared to the C group. Fish oil supplementation did not alter the area of mucus, as the means were not different between the FO and C groups or between the AFO and A groups. The average percentage of bronchioles that presented mucus was 50 % from C, 46.2 % from FO, 54.5 % from A, and 70 % from AFO.

**Table 2** Morphometric data obtained from histological analysis of lung tissue from non-asthmatic and asthmatic rats supplemented or not with fish oil

	Groups			
	C	FO	A	AFO
Total number of bronchioles	14	13	11	10
Number of bronchioles obtained from individual animals	2.8 ± 0.4	3.3 ± 0.6	2.8 ± 0.5	3.3 ± 0.9
Pi (μm ± SEM)	551.1 ± 111.2	411.0 ± 56.8	391.6 ± 45.1	500.0 ± 74.8
W <sub>Ai</sub> (μm <sup>2</sup> ± SEM)	20,621 ± 4,657	18,685 ± 2,831	15,973 ± 2,502	25,680 ± 6,068
W <sub>Ao</sub> (μm <sup>2</sup> ± SEM)	12,314 ± 3,186	9,446 ± 1,542	13,473 ± 2,701	17,340 ± 4,411
W <sub>A</sub> T (μm <sup>2</sup> ± SEM)	32,936 ± 7,783	28,138 ± 4,266	29,445 ± 4,785	43,020 ± 10,345
W <sub>A</sub> T/Ai* (μm <sup>2</sup> /μm ± SEM)	0.21 ± 0.05	0.30 ± 0.06	0.26 ± 0.04	0.22 ± 0.03
W <sub>A</sub> i/Ai* (μm <sup>2</sup> /μm ± SEM)	0.13 ± 0.03	0.20 ± 0.04	0.14 ± 0.02	0.13 ± 0.01
Number of bronchioles with mucus	7	6	6	7
Mucus (% of obliterated area from Ai ± SEM)	8.95 ± 1.87	16.15 ± 6.00	36.67 ± 8.51 <sup>a</sup>	33.25 ± 4.29 <sup>a</sup>

Data are reported as means ± SEM from C (*n* = 5), FO (*n* = 4), A (*n* = 4) and AFO (*n* = 3) groups

<sup>a</sup> *P* < 0.05 vs. C



**Fig. 4** Static lung compliance in non-asthmatic and asthmatic rats supplemented or not with fish oil. Data are reported as means ± SEM from C (*n* = 12), FO (*n* = 11), A (*n* = 9) and AFO (*n* = 8) groups; <sup>a</sup>*P* < 0.05 vs. C and FO; <sup>b</sup>*P* < 0.05 vs. A

#### Static Lung Compliance

Figure 4 shows the static lung compliance. Lung compliance in asthmatic rats was significantly lower than in controls. Fish oil supplementation resulted in higher lung compliance than in the A group and this was not different from that seen in the non-asthmatic control group.

#### Discussion

In the present study, we observed that the supplementation of asthmatic rats with fish oil was able to reduce leukocyte numbers in BALF, probably as a result of decreased chemotaxis, supporting an antiinflammatory role of this supplement. However, fish oil supplementation promoted an

increase in eosinophil infiltration to the lungs in asthmatic rats. This may be a deleterious effect since eosinophils play an important role in maintaining inflammation [21]. Various chemokines have been described as critical factors involved in the recruitment of particular subsets of inflammatory cells from the circulation into the lungs via interaction with chemokine receptors [22]. The cytokines TNF-α and IL-1β are involved in the recruitment and activation of neutrophils and eosinophils [11–13]. However, the concentration of these cytokines in the lung remained high with fish oil supplementation of asthmatic rats. Therefore the reduced chemotaxis and resulting leukocytic infiltration of the lung, seems not to involve a modification of production of these two cytokines, which were not different between fish oil treated asthmatic rats and asthmatic controls. The n-3 PUFA in fish oil could reduce the expression of receptors for chemoattractants [23], so decreasing neutrophil responsiveness to the presence of chemoattractants, or modify the expression of adhesion molecules [23] or alter the profile of lipid mediators which are involved in neutrophil movement [24]. Since leukocyte migration does not depend on a single chemokine [25], the effect of fish oil could occur through several simultaneous actions of the different components of adhesion and migration. Furthermore, eosinophil accumulation is a combination of both increased migration and prolonged survival, which is under the influence of locally generated growth factors, and is considered to be an important mechanism for selective eosinophil accumulation in allergic disease [26]. Amongst the factors involved in prolonging eosinophil survival is granulocyte-macrophage colony-stimulating factor (GM-CSF) [27]. Eosinophil migration in asthma may also be regulated by chemokines secreted by the bronchial epithelium, such as

RANTES, eotaxin, interleukin-4 (IL-4) and interleukin-5 (IL-5), or by increasing adhesion receptors present in epithelial, such as ICAM-1 [27]. It is possible that n-3 PUFA affect one (or more) of these factors related to eosinophil migration, adhesion and activation [18].

Eosinophilia is a marker of allergic reactions [28] and eosinophils are involved in airway hyperresponsiveness [28] and episodes of acute exacerbation [21]. Eosinophils contain charged proteins such as major basic protein, eosinophil cationic protein, and eosinophil peroxidase which affect muscarinic receptors, resulting in increased responsiveness of ASM [29, 30]. Thus, the lack of effect of supplemental fish oil on the functional responses of ASM in asthmatic rats may, at least in part, relate to eosinophil infiltration. Asthmatic inflammation per se altered the force of contraction in the ASM, an effect which could be linked to the increased levels of TNF- $\alpha$  and IL-1 $\beta$  as well as the infiltration of eosinophils in the lung. There is existing evidence that these factors in combination are able to modify ASM contraction [8–10, 31]. The lower force of contraction in the ASM from asthmatic rats can be explained by the removal of the ASM from the inflammatory environment: as the smooth muscle was pre-contracted in this environment it may have responded poorly when challenged with Ach. In the control group, where inflammation was absent, the smooth muscle could exhibit a normal force of contraction. The direct effect of fish oil on the ASM response to Ach might be due to the modification of transduction factors [32] and/or to fatty acid incorporation into the smooth muscle [33]. Jo and coworkers [34] demonstrated that the fatty acids present in fish oil are incorporated into the membrane of the airways muscle cells, and consequently act to reduce mRNA levels of voltage-dependent sodium channels. Since there is no evidence of structural changes indicative of airway wall thickening in this model, effects of asthma and of fish oil on the force of contraction of ASM seem to be important observations.

Although fish oil supplementation did not result in a difference in the force of contraction of ASM in asthmatic rats, there was a reduction in relaxation in response to Iso. This indicates that n-3 PUFA act on the contraction and relaxation of smooth muscle by different mechanisms. In asthma, ASM hyperresponsiveness is more strongly determined by the increased stimuli that promote muscle contraction than by the stimuli that result in relaxation [19, 29, 30, 35–37]. Altogether, these results indicate that fish oil supplementation in asthmatic rats has only limited action on ASM function. The reduction of muscle relaxation in response to Iso promoted by fish oil could interfere with clinical treatment in asthma attacks, since Iso is used for immediate relaxation of airways and release of airflow [36]. Thus, supplementation of asthmatic subjects with fish

oil could reduce the response to this bronchodilator, having an adverse effect on the control of asthma attacks. However, clinical investigations are necessary to investigate these effects further.

The literature shows that an increase in the tension of the ASM reduces the diameter of the airways [38–41], which is one of the factors that leads to decreased lung compliance [42]. Indeed, the asthmatic animals supplemented with fish oil exhibited higher static lung compliance, accompanied by decreased basal tension of the ASM and the same relation was observed in asthmatic animals. Although the presence of mucus in the airways affects the static compliance [43], in this study this relation was not seen. Dietary supplementation with fish oil in asthmatic animals was ineffective in reducing the amount of mucus present. As the amount of mucus and inflammatory cytokines were not altered by fish oil supplementation in asthmatic animals, it is possible that the basal tension of the muscle is the main factor that affects the lung compliance.

The current study identified that fish oil given at a dose of 1 g/kg body weight each day for 21 days affected some inflammatory responses (leukocyte infiltration into the lungs) but not others (BALF eosinophilia, TNF- $\alpha$  and IL-1 $\beta$ ) and improved some inflammation-related airways phenomena (compliance) but not others (obliteration and ASM force of contraction). These differential effects may be due to the dose of n-3 PUFA being given or to the duration of the supplementation being short. The latter may be particularly important for smooth muscle which may take longer than 21 days to accumulate sufficient n-3 PUFA to influence its function. It is important to note that the daily dose of 1 g/kg body weight is high compared with doses used in human studies [2, 5].

In summary, fish oil supplementation had an anti-inflammatory effect in asthmatic rats, since it reduced leukocyte infiltration into the lungs, and it improved lung compliance in these animals. However, other aspects of inflammation such as eosinophilia and two inflammatory cytokines in BALF, and inflammation-related phenomena such as airway obliteration and ASM force of contraction were not affected by fish oil in asthmatic rats. The latter is the main feature that promotes asthma exacerbation. In conclusion, the effectiveness of fish oil supplementation in asthmatic rats may be limited by an inefficient action on parameters associated to ASM function, which may relate either to an incomplete reduction of inflammation or to a resistance of ASM to the effects of n-3 PUFA. Such a lack of effect may be due to the dose of n-3 PUFA being given or to the short-term supplementation.

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**Conflict of interest** The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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## 4 METODOLOGIA

### 4.1 ANIMAIS

Foram utilizados ratos Wistar machos adultos ( $220 \pm 30\text{g}$ ) obtidos do biotério do Setor de Ciências Biológicas da Universidade Federal do Paraná. Os animais foram mantidos em gaiolas coletivas sob um ciclo claro/escuro de 12 horas, recebendo água e ração animal ad libitum (52% de carboidratos, 21% de proteínas e 4% de lipídios; NUVILAB CR1, Nuvital nutrientes Ltda, Curitiba-Pr). Os animais foram randomicamente separados em 4 grupos: controle (C), controle suplementado com óleo de peixe (S), asmático (A), asmático suplementado com óleo de peixe (AS).

Os procedimentos envolvendo animais foram previamente aprovados pelo Comitê de Ética em Experimentação Animal (CEEa, hoje denominado CEUA - Comissão de Ética no Uso de Animais) da UFPR, protocolo nº 468, de acordo com os princípios éticos estabelecidos no “Guide for the care and use of experimental animals” (Canadian Council on Animal Care).

### 4.2 SUPLEMENTAÇÃO DA DIETA

Os animais foram suplementados durante 21 dias consecutivos por via oral:

- os animais dos grupos S e AS receberam óleo de peixe na dose diária de 1g/kg de massa corpórea;
- os animais dos grupos C e A receberão água na mesma dose.

### 4.3 INDUÇÃO À ASMA

O modelo que foi utilizado para a indução à asma é baseado no protocolo descrito por Schuster *et al.* (2000). Este modelo consiste em 2 etapas:

- 1) Imunização à ovalbumina (OVA) - Os ratos dos grupos A e AS receberam duas injeções subcutâneas de 1 mL de solução salina de fosfato tamponada (PBS - solução aquosa de NaCl 0,80%, KCl 0,02%,  $\text{KH}_2\text{PO}_4$  0,012% e  $\text{Na}_2\text{HPO}_4 \cdot 12\text{H}_2\text{O}$

0,23%, pH 7,4), pH 7,4, contendo 1,0 mg de OVA adsorvida em 200 mg de hidróxido de alumínio. A primeira injeção foi realizada no 5º dia de suplementação e o intervalo entre cada injeção foi de uma semana. Os animais dos grupos C e S receberam duas injeções subcutâneas de 1mL de PBS contendo 200 mg de hidróxido de alumínio.

2) Desafio antigênico pulmonar com OVA – Nos 19º, 20º e 21º dias de suplementação, os ratos dos grupos imunizados (A e AS) à OVA foram expostos a um aerossol de OVA 5% em uma câmara durante 30 minutos por dia. Os animais dos grupos C e S foram expostos a um aerossol de PBS sem OVA, em condições semelhantes às dos ratos imunizados.

Vinte e quatro horas depois do último desafio antigênico os animais receberam uma dose letal de uretana 20% (3 mg/g. i.p.).

#### 4.4 COLETA DO LBA E DOS PULMÕES

Vinte e quatro horas após o último desafio antigênico, o LBA foi coletado por meio da traqueostomia e da lavagem cuidadosa do pulmão dos animais com 5 mL de PBS. Este procedimento foi repetido por 10 vezes para cada animal e 90-95% do volume total injetado foi recuperado. O sobrenadante da primeira alíquota retirada foi centrifugado por 8 minutos a 290 g e 4°C e separado para as dosagens de proteínas totais e de nitritos.

As amostras obtidas de cada animal foram mantidas em gelo e então centrifugadas por 8 minutos a 290 g e 4°C. O sobrenadante foi então descartado e as células ressuspensas em 500 µL de PBS para contagem total e diferencial de células.

Após a coleta do LBA, os animais foram submetidos a uma toracotomia e os pulmões foram removidos e lavados em PBS. Imediatamente, pesou-se uma porção de 400 mg do lobo inferior direito de cada animal para a determinação de hidroperóxidos lipídicos. O restante do tecido pulmonar foi congelado a – 80 °C para análises posteriores.

#### 4.5 CITOLOGIA DO LBA

Uma alíquota de 10 µL desta suspensão foi dispersa em lâmina de vidro para a contagem diferencial das células do LBA por microscopia óptica. A lâmina foi

mantida a temperatura ambiente por aproximadamente 24 horas para a secagem do material. Após este período, foi realizada a coloração panótica da lâmina com a utilização do kit INSTANT PROV (NEW PROV®). Procedeu-se então a contagem manual de 200 células por lâmina usando microscopia ótica (aumento de 1000X). As células foram classificadas como eosinófilos, macrófagos, linfócitos ou neutrófilos, de acordo com suas propriedades tintoriais e morfológicas.

A suspensão de células do LBA também foi utilizada para a determinação do número absoluto de células no LBA de cada animal por microscopia ótica (aumento de 400X). As células desta suspensão foram contadas em câmara de Neubauer Improved com azul de Trypan 0,05% para exclusão das células mortas.

#### 4.6 EXTRAÇÃO LIPÍDICA

A extração lipídica dos pulmões foi realizada como descrito por Folch *et al.* (FOLCH *et al.*, 1957). Uma porção de 100 mg do lobo intermédio pulmonar de cada rato foi homogeneizado em 1,33 mL de metanol/clorofórmio (1:2 v/v) com um homogeneizador elétrico (GGS 27, Bosch) e 0,480 mL de metanol foi adicionado. As amostras foram então homogeneizadas e centrifugadas por 10 minutos a 5.000 g e 4°C. O sobrenadante foi transferido para um tubo de vidro (5 ml) e 0,960 ml de clorofórmio foi adicionado. O extrato foi lavado uma vez com água ultrapura e três vezes com solução de lavagem (1,8 mM de CaCl<sub>2</sub>, 1,8 mM de MgCl<sub>2</sub>, 49,7 mM de NaCl, 3,0% de clorofórmio, 49% de metanol, 48% de água ultrapura). Depois disso, o extrato foi seco com uma corrente de nitrogênio e armazenado a -80°C sob atmosfera de nitrogênio.

Para a análise da bioatividade de PAF o extrato lipídico foi solubilizado com 100 µL de DMSO e então diluído com PBS (1:500 v/v).

#### 4.7 CONCENTRAÇÃO DE PROTEÍNAS TOTAIS NO LBA

Para a dosagem de proteínas utilizou-se a metodologia de Bradford (1976), adaptadas para microplacas. A primeira alíquota de LBA coletada foi centrifugada por 8 minutos a 290 g e 4°C e o sobrenadante utilizado para a análise. Em uma microplaca, 10 µL da amostra foram misturados a 250 µL do reativo de Bradford



(Coomassie brilliant blue 0,01%, etanol 4,7% e ácido fosfórico 8,5%). As proteínas presentes na amostra formam um complexo com o corante Coomassie brilliant blue e este complexo possui coloração azul, o qual é detectado no comprimento de onda utilizado na técnica. Após incubação por 5 minutos e no escuro, foi determinada a absorbância em 595 nm em espectrofotômetro para microplacas (TECAN Infinite M200). A concentração de proteínas foi determinada pela interpolação dos valores de absorbância em uma curva padrão obtida por concentrações conhecidas de padrão de albumina sérica bovina.

#### 4.8 DOSAGEM DE NITRITOS NO LBA

A metodologia utilizada foi adaptada daquela descrita por Stuehr & Marletta (1985). O LBA foi centrifugado por 8 minutos a 290 g e 4°C. Em uma microplaca de 96 poços, 100 µL do sobrenadante foi adicionado a 100 µL do reagente de Griess (mistura de cloreto de naftiletilenodiamina a 0,05% e sulfanilamida a 0,5%, em meio ácido proporcionado por H<sub>3</sub>PO<sub>4</sub> a 2,5%). Cinco minutos após, a absorbância foi determinada a 550 nm usando um espectrofotômetro para microplacas (TECAN Infinite M200). A concentração de nitritos foi determinada por interpolação dos valores de absorbância em uma curva padrão gerada a partir de concentrações conhecidas de nitrito de sódio. Os resultados foram expressos como nmol/mL de LBA.

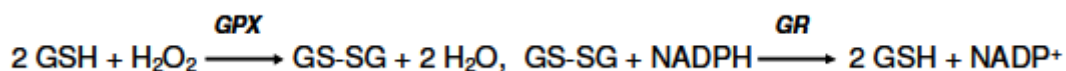
#### 4.9 DETERMINAÇÃO DA ATIVIDADE DAS ENZIMAS SUPERÓXIDO DISMUTASE E GLUTATIONA PEROXIDASE NO LBA

O LBA foi centrifugado por 8 minutos a 290 g e 4°C. A determinação colorimétrica da atividade da superóxido dismutase e da glutathione peroxidase no LBA foi realizada de acordo com o protocolo do fabricante dos kits (Bioassay Systems, California, USA).

No ensaio para determinação da atividade da superóxido dismutase, a xantina oxidase catalisa uma reação gerando ânion superóxido, que reage com o corante WST-1 (sal terazólio solúvel em água) formando um complexo colorido, o qual é detectado por espectrofotometria no comprimento de onda 440 nm. A superóxido dismutase presente na amostra remove o ânion superóxido do meio e

assim uma menor quantidade deste radical livre fica disponível para a reação cromogênica. A intensidade da cor é usada para determinar a atividade da superóxido dismutase na amostra.

O ensaio para determinar a atividade da glutathione peroxidase é fundamentado no consumo de NADPH que ocorre na sequência de reações catalisada por esta enzima.



A redução na detecção de NADPH na densidade ótica de 340 nm é diretamente proporcional à atividade da enzima na amostra.

#### 4.10 DETERMINAÇÃO DA ATIVIDADE DA ENZIMA CATALASE NO LBA

Seguiu-se a metodologia descrita por Aebi (1984). O LBA foi centrifugado por 20 minutos a 10.600 g e 4°C. O sobrenadante foi descartado e as células ressuspensas em 100 µL de PBS e homogeneizado. Uma alíquota de 10 µL do extrato celular foi adicionada a 990 µL de meio reacional (solução aquosa de H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> 20 mM, tris(hidroximetil)aminometano 0,05 M e EDTA 0,25 mM, pH 7,4), a 37°C. Imediatamente, a absorbância foi monitorada durante 2 minutos, com intervalo de 5 segundos entre cada leitura, em comprimento de onda de 240 nm em espectrofotômetro (TECAM Infinite M200). A atividade da enzima é determinada pelo consumo de H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> presente no meio reacional, expressa pela variação de absorbância em função do tempo. A atividade da catalase foi corrigida pela concentração de proteínas da amostra e os resultados foram expressos como consumo de H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> por minuto por mg de proteína (mmol/min.mg de proteína).

#### 4.11 QUANTIFICAÇÃO DE HIDROPERÓXIDOS LIPÍDICOS NO TECIDO PULMONAR

Para a quantificação de hidroperóxidos lipídicos foi adotada a metodologia descrita por Nourooz-Zadeh *et al.* (1994). Um extrato metanólico de amostras do tecido pulmonar foi produzido pela homogeneização de 400 mg do lobo pulmonar inferior direito em 1 mL de metanol, utilizando-se um homogeneizador elétrico (Bosch® GGS 27). O homogenato foi centrifugado por 5 minutos a 5000 g e 4°C.

Para cada amostra, alíquotas de 90  $\mu\text{L}$  do sobrenadante foram acondicionadas em 6 eppendorfs de 2 mL. A três destes tubos foram adicionados 10  $\mu\text{L}$  de solução metanólica de trifenilfosfina (TPP, Sigma®) 10 mM. A TPP promove a redução seletiva de hidroperóxidos. Nos outros 3 tubos foram acrescentados 10  $\mu\text{L}$  de metanol. Todos os tubos passaram por agitação vigorosa e foram incubados por 30 minutos em temperatura ambiente. Passado este período, adicionou-se 900  $\mu\text{L}$  do reagente FOX2 em todos os tubos (xilenol laranja 100  $\mu\text{M}$ , hidroxitolueno butilado (BHT) 4 mM, ácido sulfúrico 25 mM e sulfato ferroso de amônio 250  $\mu\text{M}$ , em metanol 90%). Após agitação, os tubos foram incubados novamente a temperatura ambiente por 30 minutos. Decorrido o tempo de incubação, a absorbância foi determinada em 560 nm usando espectrofotômetro (Ultrospec 2000, Pharma Biotech).

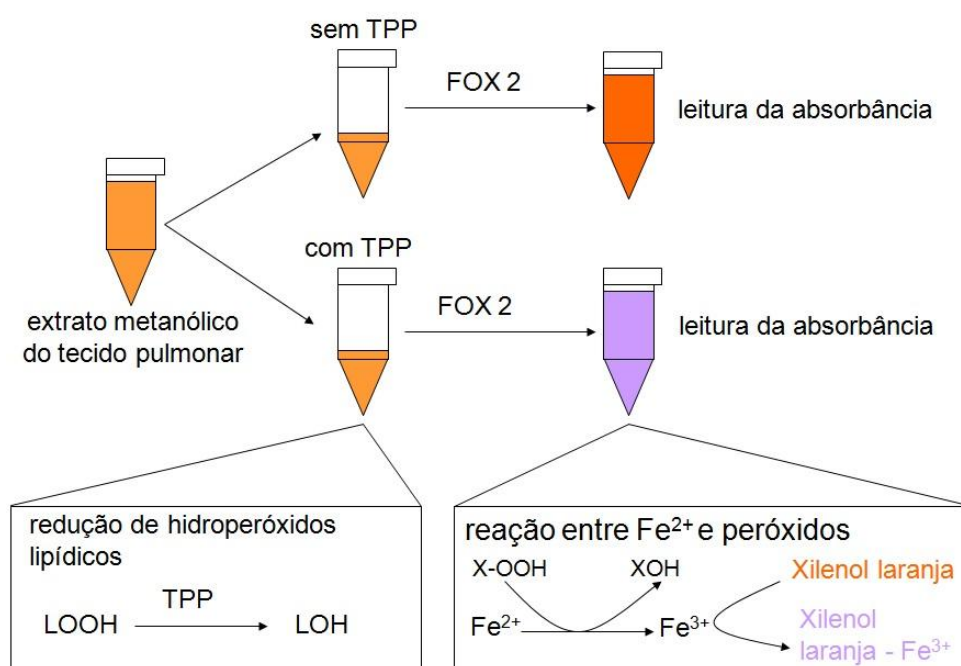


Figura 14. Esquema representativo da reação que ocorre na técnica de determinação de hidroperóxidos lipídicos com TPP.

A concentração de hidroperóxidos lipídicos foi determinada por interpolação dos valores de absorbância em uma curva padrão gerada a partir de concentrações conhecidas de peróxido de hidrogênio. Subtraindo-se o valor da concentração das amostras tratadas com TPP (sem hidroperóxidos lipídicos) do valor da concentração das amostras sem TPP, obteve-se o valor referente exclusivamente aos hidroperóxidos lipídicos. Os resultados foram corrigidos pela concentração de proteínas da amostra e foram expressos como nmol/mg de proteínas.

#### 4.12 BIOATIVIDADE DE PAF NO TECIDO PULMONAR

A determinação da bioatividade de PAF foi realizada utilizando-se neutrófilos de cavalos, conforme descrito por Muehlmann *et al.* (2010). O sangue foi coletado por punção da veia jugular, e depositado em bolsas de 500 mL (CPDA-1®, JP Indústria Farmacêutica SA) contendo citrato de sódio como anticoagulante. O sangue foi diluído com PBS (1:2). Para separar os neutrófilos, 40 mL de sangue diluído foram dispostos sobre 6 mL de Ficoll Paque Plus®, em tubo para centrífuga. Após centrifugação (400 g por 40 minutos a 4 °C), a camada superior, composta por plasma, solução de Ficoll® e células mononucleares foi descartada. A camada inferior, composta principalmente por PMNs e eritrócitos foi então dividida em duas alíquotas iguais, as quais foram separadas em dois tubos de centrífuga. A cada alíquota foi adicionada solução hemolítica em quantidade suficiente para completar 50 mL. Após incubação a 37 °C em estufa por 20 minutos, a suspensão celular, livre de eritrócitos, foi centrifugada a 400 g por 6 minutos a 4°C. O sobrenadante foi descartado e as células foram ressuspensas em PBS e centrifugadas (400 g por 6 minutos a 4°C). Após a remoção do PBS sobrenadante, as células foram ressuspensas em 5 mL de PBS contendo glucose 5 mM. A densidade de células na suspensão foi determinada por contagem em câmara de Neubauer Improved e ajustada para  $1,0 \times 10^7$  células viáveis/mL.

A essa suspensão foi adicionado FURA-2 AM (Sigma®, solução estoque 1 mM em DMSO), para concentração final de 1  $\mu$ M. A suspensão foi incubada a 37°C por 45 minutos, no escuro. As células então incorporaram o FURA-2 AM, um indicador fluorescente de cálcio. Após a incubação, as células foram lavadas com solução de Ringer (solução aquosa; NaCl 110 mM; KCl 4,0 mM; CaCl<sub>2</sub> 2 mM; MgCl<sub>2</sub> 2 mM; tris 10 mM; glucose 1 mM, pH 7,4), para a remoção do FURA-2 AM que não foi incorporado. As células foram ressuspensas em solução de Ringer para a densidade final de  $2,25 \times 10^6$  células viáveis/mL e colocadas em cubeta para a leitura da fluorescência em espectrofluorímetro (RF5301PC®, Shimadzu). As células que foram utilizadas como controle negativo para PAF foram previamente tratadas com o antagonista de receptor de PAF, BN52021 (solução 10 mM em DMSO). A cada experimento a preparação de células carregadas com FURA-2 AM foi testada com o padrão de PAF (1-O-palmitil-2-acetil-sn-glicero-3-fosfatidilcolina, solução

estoque de 3 mM em DMSO, Sigma®) nas concentrações de 1, 10 e 100 µM, na presença ou na ausência de BN52021 150 µM. Foi utilizada excitação dual com comprimentos de onda de 340 nm e 380 nm, com emissão captada em 510 nm, utilizando o software Super Ion Probe®. A leitura da fluorescência consistiu primeiramente da obtenção de uma linha de base nos primeiros 50 segundos. Após esta leitura inicial, foram adicionados 10 µL do extrato lipídico à suspensão de células, seguindo-se a agitação com uma barra magnética presente dentro da cubeta. A leitura foi realizada por mais 100 segundos. A resposta máxima obtida pelo tratamento da suspensão de células com extrato lipídico na presença de BN52021 foi subtraída da resposta máxima obtida na ausência desta substância. O resultado desta subtração foi utilizado como indicador semiquantitativo da bioatividade de PAF no extrato lipídico.

#### 4.13 ANÁLISE ESTATÍSTICA

Os valores foram expressos como média  $\pm$  EPM de no mínimo 3 repetições de pelo menos 3 experimentos diferentes. Valores considerados *outliers* pelo teste de Grubbs foram excluídos das avaliações. Os dados foram analisados com o software GraphPad Prism 5 por ANOVA *one-way* seguido por *post test* de *Tukey*. As diferenças foram consideradas significantes para  $P < 0,05$ .

## 5 RESULTADOS NÃO APRESENTADOS NO ARTIGO

### 5.1 CITOLOGIA DO LBA

#### 5.1.1 Número Absoluto de Células

Em ratos asmáticos, o número total de células no LBA foi 2,58 vezes maior do que no grupo C ( $1,29 \pm 0,12 \times 10^6$  no grupo C vs.  $3,33 \pm 0,43 \times 10^6$  no grupo A,  $P < 0,05$ ), indicando uma significativa infiltração de leucócitos, que é uma característica da inflamação asmática. A suplementação da dieta com óleo de peixe foi capaz de suprimir em 38,7% esta infiltração de células inflamatórias em ratos asmáticos ( $2,04 \pm 0,20 \times 10^6$  no grupo AS,  $P < 0,05$  vs. grupo A), retornando a condição observada nos animais controle (Figura 15).

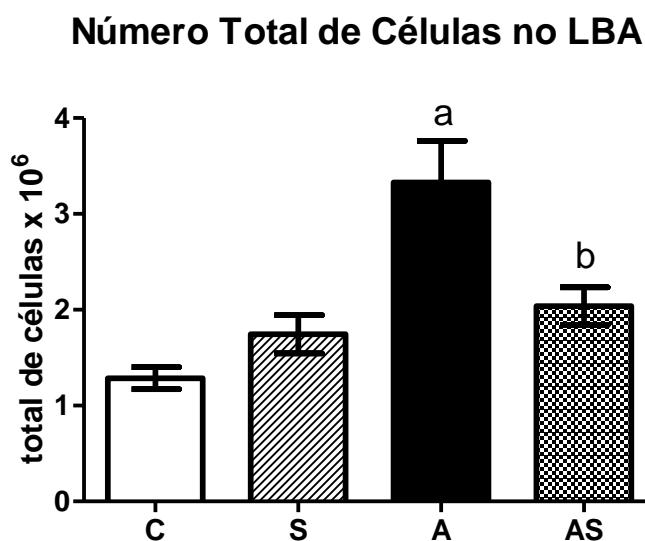


Figura 15. Número absoluto de células no LBA nos grupos controle (C), suplementado com óleo de peixe (S), asmático (A) e asmático suplementado com óleo de peixe (AS). <sup>a</sup> $P < 0,05$  vs. C; <sup>b</sup> $P < 0,05$  vs. A.

#### 5.1.2 Contagem Diferencial de Células

Conforme pode ser observado na tabela 1, nos animais com asma verificou-se um aumento de 48 vezes no número de eosinófilos no LBA, uma característica da inflamação asmática visto neste modelo. Com a suplementação com óleo de peixe, o número de eosinófilos aumentou ainda mais, sendo aproximadamente 90% maior que nos animais asmáticos ( $P < 0,5$  vs. grupo A). O número de neutrófilos foi 8,4

vezes maior no LBA no grupo A em comparação com o grupo C ( $P < 0,05$ ). No entanto, embora os neutrófilos tenham sido numericamente menores no grupo AS do que no grupo A, a diferença não foi significativa ( $P > 0,05$ ), sugerindo que a suplementação de óleo de peixe não alterou a infiltração de neutrófilos nos pulmões de asmáticos. O número de macrófagos e linfócitos não foi significativamente diferente entre os grupos, embora novamente os números de ambos os tipos celulares tenham sido menores no grupo AS do que no grupo A.

Tabela 1. Contagem diferencial de células no LBA.

	GROUPS			
	C	S	A	AS
Eosinófilos ( $\times 10^5/\text{mL} \pm \text{SEM}$ )	0.07 $\pm$ 0.02	0.11 $\pm$ 0.06	3.37 $\pm$ 0.64 <sup>a</sup>	6.40 $\pm$ 0.83 <sup>a,b</sup>
Macrófagos ( $\times 10^5/\text{mL} \pm \text{SEM}$ )	8.68 $\pm$ 1.75	10.44 $\pm$ 1.65	10.76 $\pm$ 1.78	7.05 $\pm$ 1.20
Linfócitos ( $\times 10^5/\text{mL} \pm \text{SEM}$ )	0.57 $\pm$ 0.14	0.50 $\pm$ 0.10	3.78 $\pm$ 1.98	0.57 $\pm$ 0.22
Neutrófilos ( $\times 10^5/\text{mL} \pm \text{SEM}$ )	0.35 $\pm$ 0.18	0.67 $\pm$ 0.41	2.95 $\pm$ 1.11 <sup>a</sup>	0.72 $\pm$ 0.27

<sup>a</sup>  $P < 0.05$  vs. C; <sup>b</sup>  $P < 0.05$  vs. A.

## 5.2 CONCENTRAÇÃO DE PROTEÍNAS TOTAIS NO LBA

A asma promoveu um aumento de 87,7% na concentração de proteínas totais no LBA (91,62  $\pm$  6,27  $\mu\text{g/mL}$  no grupo A vs. 48,81  $\pm$  3,70  $\mu\text{g/mL}$  no grupo C,  $P < 0,0001$ ), indicando um maior extravasamento de proteínas. A suplementação da dieta com óleo de peixe promoveu um aumento adicional de 67,4% na concentração de proteínas totais no LBA de indivíduos asmáticos (153,40  $\pm$  12,78  $\mu\text{g/mL}$ ,  $P < 0,0001$  vs. Grupo A), o que demonstra que o óleo de peixe potencializa o efeito da asma sobre este parâmetro (Figura 16).

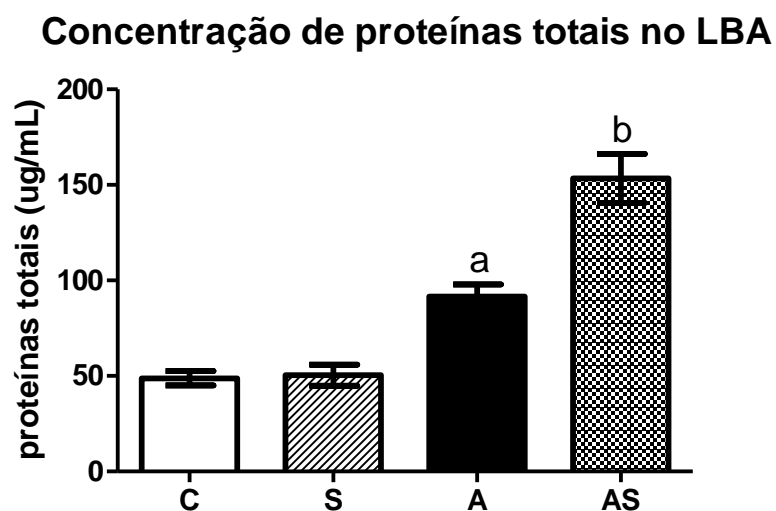


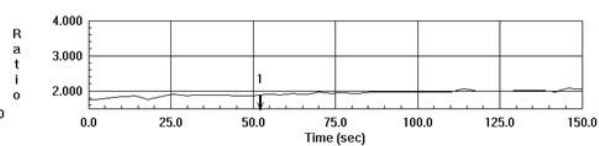
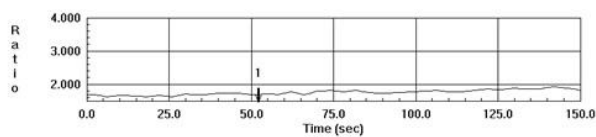
Figura 16. Concentração de proteínas totais no LBA nos grupos controle (C), suplementado com óleo de peixe (S), asmático (A) e asmático suplementado com óleo de peixe (AS). <sup>a</sup>P < 0,0001 vs. C; <sup>b</sup>P < 0,0001 vs. A.

### 5.3 BIOATIVIDADE DE PAF NO PULMÃO

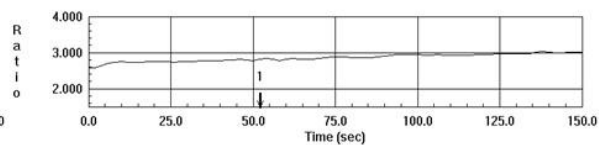
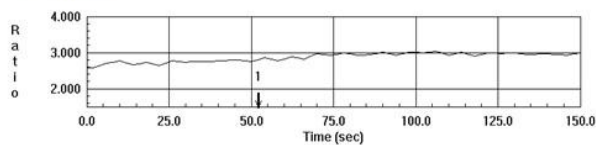
Na figura 17 são apresentados os gráficos representativos de cada grupo experimental da razão 340/380 nm obtida para a análise da bioatividade de PAF. Quando o PAF se liga ao seu receptor na membrana dos neutrófilos, ocorre um influxo de cálcio que se liga ao Fura-2. O BN52021, antagonista do receptor de PAF, impede a ligação do PAF ao seu receptor e este influxo de cálcio não ocorre. Os gráficos demonstram o registro da variação da emissão de fluorescência pelo Fura-2.



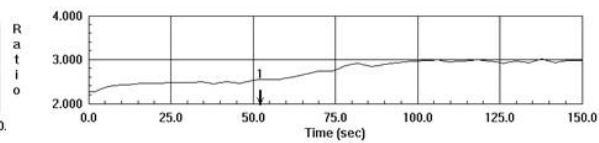
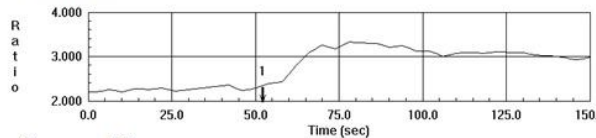
## Grupo C



## Grupo S



## Grupo A



## Grupo AS

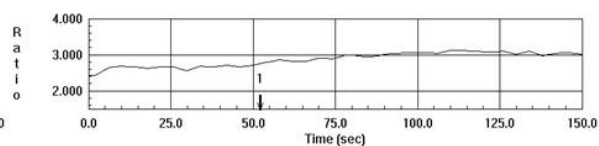
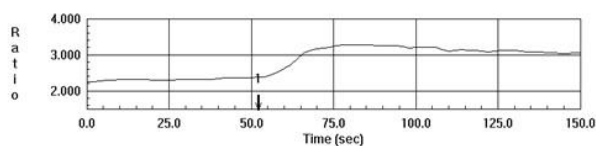


Figura 17. Gráficos representativos de cada grupo experimental da bioatividade de PAF. Para cada grupo experimental são apresentados os gráficos da razão 340/380 nm sem BN52021 (esquerda) e com BN52021 (direita).

## 6 DISCUSSÃO

No presente estudo, a asma aumentou marcadores pulmonares do estresse oxidativo (hidroperóxidos lipídicos e nitrito), reduziu a atividade de enzimas antioxidantes protetoras do pulmão e aumentou a bioatividade de PAF, um indicador da inflamação. A suplementação da dieta com óleo de peixe foi capaz de conter esses efeitos da asma, com exceção da bioatividade de PAF. Assim, o óleo de peixe apresentou um efeito diferencial sobre os parâmetros relacionados com o estresse oxidativo e a bioatividade de PAF. O estresse oxidativo foi reduzido, com base na determinação da atividade de enzimas antioxidantes e concentração de espécies reativas e de hidroperóxidos de lipídicos (Figuras 8, 9, 10 e 12).

A suplementação da dieta com óleo de peixe foi capaz de reverter a atividade da superóxido dismutase e da glutathione peroxidase em pacientes asmáticos, retornando aos valores do estado não inflamatório. A atividade da enzima catalase em ratos asmáticos não foi alterada pelo suplemento. A enzima superóxido dismutase desempenha um papel importante na proteção celular contra o estresse oxidativo (COMHAIR; ERZURUM, 2010) por catalisar a conversão de ânion superóxido a peróxido de hidrogênio (Figura 18) (COMHAIR; ERZURUM, 2010; OWAYED; DHAUNSI; AL-MUKHAIZEEM, 2008; REYNAERT *et al.*, 2007). Na asma, a atividade da superóxido dismutase é significativamente menor no LBA e em células epiteliais das vias aéreas (COMHAIR; ERZURUM, 2010; KALELI *et al.*, 2006; RAHMAN; BISWAS; KODE, 2006). Embora seja considerada um dos mecanismos mais importantes de proteção contra os danos celulares mediados por ânion superóxido, a enzima superóxido dismutase produz peróxido de hidrogênio, outro agente oxidante. Assim, a capacidade antioxidante também depende da atividade da enzima catalase (PERISIC, 2007). A catalase é responsável pela remoção de peróxido de hidrogênio produzido durante a oxidação de ácidos graxos, assim como o que resulta da ação da enzima superóxido dismutase sobre o ânion superóxido (COMHAIR; ERZURUM, 2010; REYNAERT *et al.*, 2007; RHEE *et al.*, 2005). Estudos recentes demonstram uma redução na atividade da catalase em pacientes com exacerbação asmática aguda (OWAYED; DHAUNSI; AL-MUKHAIZEEM, 2008), que pode chegar a 50% no LBA (COMHAIR; ERZURUM, 2010). A enzima glutathione peroxidase é essencial para a remoção de produtos tóxicos da peroxidação lipídica e de peróxido de hidrogênio (COMHAIR; ERZURUM, 2010; NADEEM *et al.*, 2003;

REYNAERT *et al.*, 2007; RHEE *et al.*, 2005), que é continuamente gerado como resultado da infiltração de leucócitos inflamatórios no pulmão (NADEEM *et al.*, 2003). Estudos apontam que a atividade da glutathione peroxidase também está reduzida na asma (NADEEM *et al.*, 2003; RAHMAN; BISWAS; KODE, 2006). Os achados do presente trabalho sugerem um papel para os AGPIs  $\omega$ -3 do óleo de peixe no controle do estresse oxidativo: o aumento da atividade das enzimas antioxidantes podem explicar as baixas concentrações de marcadores de estresse oxidativo. O papel da suplementação com óleo de peixe no controle do estresse oxidativo também se deve ao fato de que, com a melhora da atividade destas enzimas antioxidantes, uma maior quantidade dos seus substratos, ânion superóxido e peróxido de hidrogênio, pode ser removida do ambiente inflamatório pulmonar. A redução da atividade enzimática observada na asma está associada a um aumento de ERO e ERN, que levam a alterações de proteínas e alterações de suas funções que são biologicamente relevantes para a iniciação e manutenção da inflamação (COMHAIR; ERZURUM, 2010). Tais alterações incluem a redução da capacidade antioxidante das enzimas superóxido dismutase, glutathione peroxidase e catalase (COMHAIR; ERZURUM, 2010; MAK *et al.*, 2004; OWAYED; DHAUNSI; AL-MUKHAIZEEM, 2008; PERIŠIĆ; SREČKOVIĆ; MATIĆ, 2007; REYNAERT *et al.*, 2007), que contribui fortemente para o estresse oxidativo em asmáticos. Em concordância com o exposto na literatura (COMHAIR; ERZURUM, 2010; KALELI *et al.*, 2006; RAHMAN; BISWAS; KODE, 2006; NADEEM *et al.*, 2003), neste estudo nós detectamos uma redução na atividade das enzimas superóxido dismutase, glutathione peroxidase e catalase nos animais asmáticos.

O estresse oxidativo exerce diretamente papel em diferentes aspectos da inflamação asmática e pode influenciar a gravidade da patologia. Assim, a adição de antioxidantes na dieta pode ser um meio de proteção contra agentes oxidantes nocivos e pode inibir etapas subsequentes de amplificação da resposta inflamatória. Considerando-se que o estresse oxidativo afeta fortemente a severidade da asma, o uso de terapias antioxidantes associadas ao tratamento convencional poderia melhorar a qualidade de vida dos pacientes com asma (ZANATTA *et al.*, 2012). Em resumo, embora a atividade da enzima catalase não tenha sido alterada pela suplementação, a reversão da atividade das enzimas superóxido dismutase e glutathione peroxidase, no geral, demonstra uma ação antioxidante do óleo de peixe na asma e pode indicar um importante papel da suplementação da dieta com óleo

de peixe na condição asmática, auxiliando no controle do estresse oxidativo. A ação antioxidante da suplementação com óleo de peixe também tem sido demonstrada em estudos prévios em casos de colite ulcerativa, aterosclerose e doença renal (BARBOSA *et al.*, 2003; KIM *et al.*, 2005a; KIM *et al.*, 2005b, WANG *et al.*, 2004). No entanto, tais efeitos na asma não haviam sido relatados. O mecanismo de ação pelo qual o óleo de peixe exerce o seu efeito sobre as enzimas antioxidantes na asma pode ser por meio de uma ação direta sobre as enzimas, independentemente de mediadores inflamatórios, uma vez que na ausência de inflamação o suplemento teve efeito sobre a atividade da superóxido dismutase e da catalase (Figuras 9 e 11).

A ação antioxidante do óleo de peixe na asma também foi observada em outros parâmetros relacionados com o estresse oxidativo, tais como a concentração de nitritos. O óleo de peixe, quando administrado a animais asmáticos, reduziu a produção de nitritos. A concentração de nitritos é uma indicação da produção de óxido nítrico, que é um precursor de espécies reativas envolvidas na peroxidação lipídica (BERRY *et al.*, 1991; STAMLER; HAUSLADEN, 1998; JOURD'HEUIL *et al.*, 1998; MATES *et al.*, 2000). É provável que o óleo de peixe tenha suprimido a produção de radicais livres extremamente tóxicos presentes na inflamação asmática, tais como o radical hidroxil, o qual é formado a partir do óxido nítrico (Figura 18). O óxido nítrico reage com o ânion superóxido, ambos produzidos simultaneamente por células inflamatórias ativadas, gerando peroxinitrito (RAHMAN; BISWAS; KODE, 2006). A partir do peroxinitrito, dentre outros produtos, pode ser formado o radical hidroxil (HALLIWELL, 1991), que é uma das principais espécies reativas responsáveis pela peroxidação lipídica (SPITTELER, 2001). Dentro deste contexto, a ação antioxidante do óleo de peixe sobre a produção de nitritos também é importante para o controle do estresse oxidativo na asma.

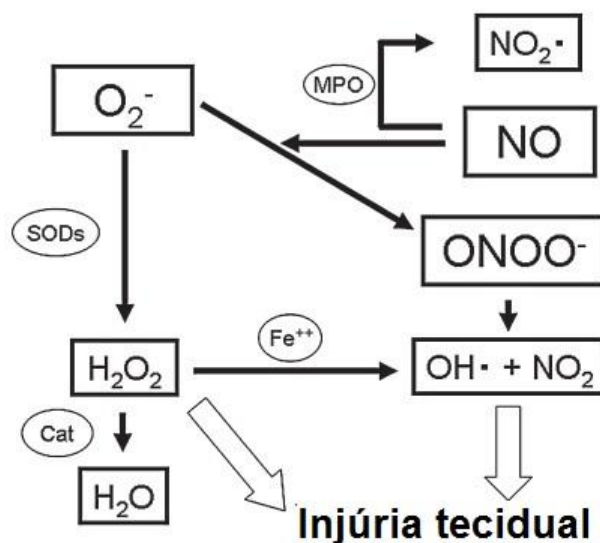


Figura 18. Reações envolvendo as espécies reativas de oxigênio e nitrogênio. Adaptada de Sugiura; Ichinose, 2008.

A proposta de que houve supressão da geração de radicais livres foi reforçada pelo fato de que o óleo de peixe também reduziu a produção de hidroperóxidos lipídicos, um conhecido marcador do estresse oxidativo e da peroxidação lipídica resultante da inflamação asmática (WOOD; GIBSON; GARG, 2003). Em tecidos onde ocorre estresse oxidativo, tais como no pulmão de asmáticos, uma grande quantidade de hidroperóxidos lipídicos é formada por peroxidação lipídica, uma vez que os radicais livres em grande quantidade são responsáveis pela peroxidação lipídica. Em concordância com os achados descritos na literatura (MUEHLMANN *et al.*, 2010), a peroxidação lipídica pulmonar observada em nosso estudo estava aumentada nos animais asmáticos (Figura 12). Na asma, o processo de peroxidação lipídica pode ter consequências negativas, como a hiperreatividade das vias aéreas, extravasamento de plasma, constrição da musculatura lisa e consequente obstrução das vias aéreas (MUEHLMANN *et al.*, 2010). Considerando-se os danos causados por moléculas geradas a partir da peroxidação lipídica na asma, a redução da produção de nitritos e de hidroperóxido lipídicos indicam que a suplementação da dieta com óleo de peixe pode desempenhar um papel antioxidante importante nesta patologia.

Por meio da peroxidação lipídica causada por ERO e ERN, moléculas pró-inflamatórias podem ser formadas, como o lipídio PAF-like. No presente estudo, a

suplementação da dieta de animais asmáticos com óleo de peixe não teve efeito sobre a bioatividade de PAF (Figura 13). Como o óleo de peixe contém uma grande quantidade de AGPIs que poderiam ser substratos para reações de peroxidação lipídica, lipídios PAF-*like* poderiam ser formados e, assim, aumentar a bioatividade de PAF. Por outro lado, com base nos resultados apresentados em nosso estudo, o estresse oxidativo pode ser controlado pela suplementação de ratos asmáticos com óleo de peixe, e então a bioatividade de PAF diminuiria com o suplemento. Na realidade, nenhum efeito do óleo de peixe sobre a bioatividade de PAF no pulmão de animais asmáticos foi observado. Assim, é provável que a bioatividade de PAF observada nos animais asmáticos possa ser decorrente do PAF formado enzimaticamente e não como um resultado do estresse oxidativo.

Na asma, o PAF está envolvido na hiperresponsividade brônquica e na consequente broncoconstrição, além de estar associado a uma permeabilidade vascular aumentada e à quimiotaxia e ativação de leucócitos (ZIMMERMAN *et al.*, 2002; UHLIG; GOGGEL; ENGEL, 2005; PRESCOTT *et al.*, 2000). Quando o PAF é produzido, ele estimula as células das vias respiratórias a secretarem leucotrieno B4 (GABRIJELCIC *et al.*, 2003), um potente mediador pró-inflamatório que está diretamente relacionado à responsividade das vias aéreas (FOSTER *et al.*, 2013). Portanto, a ação do PAF sobre a hiperresponsividade brônquica pode ser mediada pela indução da secreção de leucotrienos. O que nos leva a relacionar os leucotrienos à ação do PAF é o fato de que drogas anti-leucotrienos são muito eficazes em reverter a hiperresponsividade observada na asma. Além disso, em estudos anteriormente realizados por nosso grupo, verificamos que a suplementação da dieta de animais asmáticos com óleo de peixe não afetou a força de contração do músculo liso das vias aéreas (ASM), que é a principal característica que promove a exacerbação asmática, uma reação imediata de broncoespasmo (MIRANDA *et al.*, 2013). Considerando-se que o PAF está relacionado com a broncoconstrição, a ação ineficaz do óleo de peixe em parâmetros associados à função do ASM relatada em estudos prévios pode estar relacionada com a sua falta de efeito sobre a bioatividade de PAF.

Retomando a pergunta do presente trabalho: A suplementação da dieta de animais asmáticos com óleo de peixe modifica a bioatividade de PAF como consequência de alterações no estresse oxidativo? Como podemos observar, considerando o processo em duas etapas – estresse oxidativo e bioatividade de PAF

- o óleo de peixe apresenta, na verdade, uma ação divergente sobre esses dois aspectos da inflamação asmática: controla o estresse oxidativo, mas não altera a bioatividade de PAF.

Além da avaliação de parâmetros relacionados com o estresse oxidativo e o PAF, também foram avaliados parâmetros relacionados com a inflamação asmática, parâmetros estes que caracterizam o modelo de asma adotado. A asma é uma doença inflamatória caracterizada por infiltração de leucócitos e eosinofilia, características estas observadas nos animais asmáticos em nosso estudo (Figura 15 e Tabela 1). A suplementação de animais asmáticos com óleo de peixe reduziu o número de leucócitos totais no LBA, provavelmente em consequência de uma quimiotaxia reduzida. Esta redução na infiltração de leucócitos no LBA demonstra um papel anti-inflamatório deste suplemento na asma. No entanto, a suplementação da dieta de animais asmáticos com óleo de peixe causou uma eosinofilia pulmonar ainda maior do que a observada nos animais asmáticos não suplementados. O aumento da eosinofilia pode ser uma ação prejudicial do óleo de peixe na patologia, uma vez que os eosinófilos estão relacionados com a manutenção da inflamação asmática (HALDAR *et al.*, 2009). Além disso, os eosinófilos estão envolvidos na hiperresponsividade das vias aéreas (JACOBSEN *et al.*, 2012) e episódios de exacerbação aguda observados na asma (HALDAR *et al.*, 2009). O PAF é uma das moléculas capazes de promover a quimiotaxia de leucócitos (MUEHLMAN, 2010), inclusive de eosinófilos. Entretanto, apesar da manutenção da bioatividade de PAF encontrada com a suplementação de animais asmáticos houve um aumento no número de eosinófilos no LBA destes animais. O PAF não é a única molécula envolvida na quimiotaxia de leucócitos. Várias quimiocinas têm sido relacionadas com o recrutamento de subconjuntos particulares de células inflamatórias a partir da circulação para os pulmões por meio da interação com os receptores de quimiocina (TIAN *et al.*, 2011). Dentre elas estão as citocinas fator de necrose tumoral  $\alpha$  (TNF- $\alpha$ ) e interleucina 1- $\beta$  (IL-1 $\beta$ ) (TRIFILIEFF *et al.*, 2002; DRAGON *et al.*, 2007; CHAI *et al.*, 2011). Considerando que a migração de leucócitos não depende de uma única quimiocina (YANG *et al.*, 1998), o efeito do óleo de peixe pode ocorrer por várias ações simultâneas em diferentes fatores envolvidos na adesão e na migração dos leucócitos. A migração de eosinófilos na asma também pode ser regulada por quimiocinas secretadas pelo epitélio brônquico, tais como RANTES, eotaxina, IL-4 e IL-5, ou por alteração na quantidade de receptores de adesão presentes no epitélio,

tais como moléculas de adesão intercelular-1 (ICAM-1) (SANMUGALINGHAM *et al.*, 2000). Além disso, a eosinofilia pode estar relacionada com outros fatores além da migração aumentada, como com a sobrevivência prolongada. A sobrevivência dos eosinófilos é influenciada por fatores de crescimento produzidos localmente, e considera-se este um mecanismo importante para o acúmulo seletivo de eosinófilos em doenças alérgicas (WARDLAW, 1999). O fator estimulante de colônias de granulócitos e macrófagos (GM-CSF) é um dos fatores que estão envolvidos no prolongamento da sobrevivência dos eosinófilos (SANMUGALINGHAM *et al.*, 2000). É possível que os AGPIs  $\omega$ -3 afetem algum destes fatores relacionados com a migração, a adesão e a ativação de eosinófilos (YIN *et al.*, 2009).

Uma das características da inflamação asmática é o aumento da permeabilidade vascular com consequente extravasamento de plasma e proteínas. A dosagem de proteínas no LBA fornece um bom índice do estado inflamatório pulmonar, indicando principalmente o estado funcional da barreira alvéolo-capilar (PARKER; TOWNSLEY, 2004). No presente estudo observamos que os animais asmáticos possuem alta concentração de proteínas totais no LBA (Figura 16), comparativamente ao grupo controle, indicando a ocorrência de um quadro inflamatório. A suplementação da dieta de ratos asmáticos com óleo de peixe promoveu um aumento adicional na concentração de proteínas totais no LBA desses animais. Com já descrito, o PAF pode promover o aumento da permeabilidade vascular. No entanto, apesar de observarmos que o óleo de peixe não alterou a bioatividade de PAF, uma maior permeabilidade vascular, expressa pela concentração de proteínas totais no LBA, foi encontrada nos animais asmáticos suplementados. Estes dados indicam que o óleo de peixe exerceu um efeito sobre a permeabilidade vascular independente de PAF. Sendo assim, podemos inferir que a concentração de proteínas totais no LBA de animais asmáticos suplementados com óleo de peixe possa ser ocasionada por outros mediadores, que não PAF, como o leucotrieno B<sub>4</sub>.



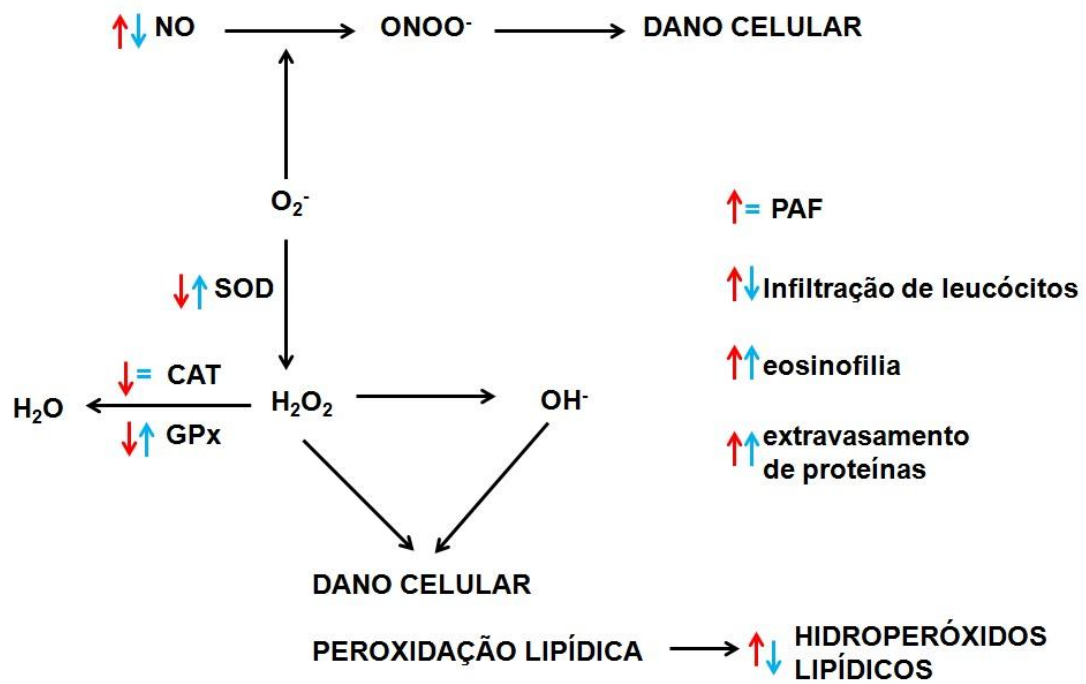


Figura 19. Esquema geral do efeito do óleo de peixe sobre a asma. As setas em vermelho indicam a característica de cada parâmetro na asma. As setas em azul indicam o efeito do óleo de peixe na asma sobre estes parâmetros. NO, óxido nítrico. ONOO<sup>-</sup>, peróxinitrito; O<sub>2</sub><sup>-</sup>, ânion superóxido; H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>, peróxido de hidrogênio; OH<sup>-</sup>, radical hidroxil; SOD, superóxido dismutase; CAT, catalase; GPx, glutathione peroxidase.

## 7 CONCLUSÃO

A suplementação da dieta com óleo de peixe (dose 1g/Kg) apresentou um efeito antioxidante em animais asmáticos, uma vez que o suplemento foi capaz de aumentar a atividade das enzimas antioxidantes superóxido dismutase e glutathione peroxidase e reduzir a produção de nitritos e hidroperóxidos lipídicos. O óleo de peixe também reduziu a infiltração total de células no LBA de ratos asmáticos. No entanto, a suplementação não apresentou efeito sobre a atividade da enzima antioxidante catalase e sobre a bioatividade de PAF, uma molécula pró-inflamatória com um papel central na inflamação asmática e que está relacionada ao estresse oxidativo. Além disso, o óleo de peixe aumentou o extravasamento de proteínas totais e a eosinofilia no LBA de animais asmáticos.

Em conclusão, a suplementação de óleo de peixe tem um efeito dual em ratos asmáticos, reduzindo o estresse oxidativo, mas não apresentando efeito sobre a bioatividade de PAF.

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## **ANEXO 1**



Ministério da Educação  
UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DO PARANÁ  
Setor de Ciências Biológicas  
Comitê de Ética em Experimentação Animal  
(CEEa)



Nº 468

## CERTIFICADO

O Comitê de Ética em Experimentação Animal (CEEa) do Setor de Ciências Biológicas da Universidade Federal do Paraná, instituído pela PORTARIA Nº 787/03-BL, de 11 de junho de 2003, com base nas normas para a constituição e funcionamento do CEEa, estabelecidas pela RESOLUÇÃO Nº 01/03-BL, de 09 de maio de 2003 e considerando o contido no Regimento Interno do CEEa, **CERTIFICA** que os procedimentos utilizando animais no projeto de pesquisa abaixo especificado, estão de acordo com os princípios éticos estabelecidos pelo Colégio Brasileiro de Experimentação Animal (COBEA) e exigências estabelecidas em "Guide for the Care and Use of Experimental Animals (Canadian Council on Animal Care)".

## CERTIFICATION

The Ethics Animal Experiment Committee of the Setor de Ciências Biológicas of the Federal University of Paraná, established by the DECREE Nº 787/03-BL on June 11th 2003, based upon the RESOLUTION Nº 01/03-BL from May 9th 2003, and upon the CEEa internal regiment, CERTIFIES that the procedures using animals in the research project specified below are in agreement with the ethical principals established by the Experimental Animal Brazilian Council (COBEA), and with the requirements of the "Guide for the Care and Use of Experimental Animals (Canadian Council on Animal Care)".

**PROCESSO:** 23075.029677/2010-31

**APROVADO:** 17/08/2010 – R.O. 07/2010

**TÍTULO:** Efeito da suplementação da dieta com óleo de peixe e vitamina E sobre a funcionalidade de macrófagos alveolares e produção de PAF e PAF-like no pulmão de ratos Wistar asmáticos

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